

**A STUDY OF RELIGIOUS  
TELEVISION PROGRAMMES  
IN THE UK:  
Communicators of Challenge  
or  
Agents of Reinforcement?**

by

**Neil A. Simpson**

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# DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own original work  
and that previously it has neither been published nor submitted elsewhere

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. B. Singh', is positioned below the declaration text.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to record my gratitude to the following organisations and individuals who have made this study possible. In particular, my thanks go to the Whitefield Institute, New College (University of Edinburgh), and the Sandford St. Martin Trust for their financial help and pastoral concern. I am also indebted to those who have assisted in the many practical aspects of data collection - the elders (and others) of the West Church and St. Mary's, Haddington; the Rev. Mark and Elizabeth Burleigh of Horsham Baptist Church; John and Jo at Alfreton; the Media Representatives of the Mothers' Union; and all who agreed to be interviewed by me or who took the trouble to respond to my requests for information. I shall long remember the gracious hospitality extended to me by the staff of the Centre for Study of Christian Communications during my visit there.

The study has benefitted enormously from the frank comments of those who supervised it - Prof. Duncan Forrester, Dr. Robin Gill, and Dr. Chris Arthur; without their guidance and encouragement, it would never have matured the way it has. A special note of thanks is due to Dr. Alex Robertson of the Department of Social Policy and Social Work at Edinburgh University, who was instrumental in the design of the questionnaire survey.

Finally, I am very aware that without the loving support of my wife and children, and the prayerful interest of friends, I would have given up long ago.

I dedicate this work to my parents, in the sure knowledge that:  
*"He is able to do exceedingly abundantly beyond all that we ask or think,  
according to the power that works within us".*

## ABSTRACT

### A STUDY OF RELIGIOUS TELEVISION PROGRAMMES IN THE UK: Communicators of Challenge or Agents of Reinforcement?

Neil A. Simpson

University of Edinburgh, 1989

In the 1930's, Gramsci took the concept of 'hegemony' and invested it with new meaning - he redefined it as the way in which the State maintains its supremacy through the dissemination of a particular world-view, not so much by coercion as by the tacit co-operation of its constituent parts, among them the legislature, educational system and the Church.

In 1981, Patrick Hughes [*British Broadcasting: Programmes and Power*, Chartwell-Bratt] argued the case that the broadcasting institutions of this country are similarly implicated in this reinforcement process, and can do no other than participate in the promulgation of the dominant world-view.

It is the author's contention that the Gospel is primarily a message of challenge, and if so, then it must (potentially at least) run the risk of running counter to prevalent value systems: notions of powerlessness, community and self-sacrifice are difficult to reconcile with images of strength, individualism and self-assertion.

This study examines the relationships existent between the religious broadcasters and the churches, the socio-political and legal context within which they operate, and the people who watch religious programmes. The way in which this has been done is as follows:-

1. As many Christian organisations involved in the process of producing or distributing visual material as possible have been contacted with a view to ascertaining their perceived goals and objectives, and their overall contribution to the whole assessed.

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2. Selected personnel within the broadcasting institutions have been interviewed along similar lines.

3. An audience survey, designed to answer such questions as *'Why do people watch religious programmes?', 'How do they watch them?', & 'What do they get out of them?'* has been carried out and evaluated. One fundamental aspect of this was to discover whether anyone has been **challenged** in any way by such a programme, and if so, whether any significant factors could be isolated which might lead to a better understanding of the communicative processes involved.

4. Certain programmes representative of the different genres of religious broadcasting have been recorded and their content analysed.

In addition to this empirical work, existing literature and theoretical material (albeit sparse) has been examined and taken into account wherever possible.

The study appears to confirm Hughes' theory with respect to reinforcement: analysis of the survey data revealed that very few of the respondents had ever undergone any sort of behavioural change as a direct result of watching a religious programme, and of those that had, it was the highly 'committed' who were significantly more likely than expected to be involved. Three factors above all emerged as important determinants - Age, 'Commitment' and socio-economic 'Fragility'.

Amongst the conclusions are:-

- that there is a need for a comprehensive media policy on the part of all those involved in communicating the Gospel, especially in light of the recent White Paper on Broadcasting in the 1990's;
- that further research is needed into the mechanism whereby attitudinal and behavioural change takes place, in the specific context of Christian televisual material;
- that those advocating an 'Oppositional' approach to religious broadcasting (ie. by setting up a Christian channel, for instance), are hindered by, amongst other things, a lack of resources.

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# Part One

## A THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

Chapter One  
INTRODUCTION



## *1.1 Context*

Televised religion in the UK is preparing to face its greatest challenge since the decision of Churchill's government in 1953 to allow commercial television. At that time, the BBC and Churches joined forces in a campaign aimed at opposing the perceived threat of commercialised Christianity which, it was felt, would destroy all that had been so carefully built up by the religious broadcasters to date; now, the same fears have given rise to a scenario in which trans-Atlantic televangelists buy their way into the British market, impose their Gospel message on an unsuspecting viewing public, and drain the churches of their members'. In an effort to prepare people, books such as Peter Elvy's 'Buying Time' (1986) in concert with media coverage of the 'Pearly Gates' scandal (to name but one recent misdemeanour amongst the American television preachers), and the more academically inclined offerings of Peter Horsfield (1984) and William Fore (1987) in the States, unitedly expose the weaknesses of the Electronic Church. At the same time, an unprecedented number of extra-denominational Christian groups in this country are engaged in raising and spending large amounts of money in devising a culturally acceptable equivalent.

Against this backdrop, and in the face of a marked lack of substantive writing on the subject, this present study was undertaken in the hope of providing at least some objective, empirically testable, criteria whereby the success (or otherwise) of religious broadcasters in communicating the Gospel could be evaluated. My departure point is a volume entitled "British Broadcasting : Programmes and Power" by Patrick Hughes, published by Chartwell-Bratt in 1981. The book attempts to set media studies (and TV studies in particular) within the wider context of the relationship, both explicit and implicit, between Broadcasting and State, stressing the role of the former in maintaining the credibility of the latter.

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<sup>1</sup> That such a possibility is taken seriously can be judged from the strength of feeling running in broadcasting circles, as evidenced in the decision to screen 'The Vision' on BBC 1, 10th January 1988. This dramatic presentation purported to show what might happen if (or when) such unscrupulous dealers in emotional manipulation were allowed to carry on their business in the UK. The fact that the name 'Family Channel' was chosen to convey the message - the same as that adopted by Vision Broadcasting International on certain cable networks in the south of England - is presumed to be coincidental.

## Chapter One: Introduction

I intend to adopt the general argument propounded by Hughes, not because I necessarily agree with every aspect of his particular analysis but for the simple reason that it offers a genuinely helpful insight into the whole complex area<sup>1</sup>.

In this opening chapter, I shall offer some introductory remarks which hopefully give a true reflection of his main arguments, before embarking on what might more properly be regarded as the central concern of the study, namely a critique of the phenomenon of religious broadcasting as it has evolved in the UK, together with an evaluation of the implications this has for the communication of the Christian gospel and an examination of its effectiveness.

### 1.2 Study and Change

Hughes contends that before any investigative work can properly be carried out, it is important to clarify what we are seeking to do by collecting raw data for analysis, whatever the subject under scrutiny. He sets the scene for media studies in the following way :-

*This book's underlying themes are that study is a pre-requisite to political change; that broadcasters reinforce opinion and experience developed in people's everyday lives, rather than 'manipulating' us; that the broadcasting institutions in Britain reflect and reinforce the power relations of this patriarchal capitalist social formation to the benefit of those that rule it; and that what is needed is not just 'alternative' broadcasting, but an oppositional theory and practise which directly challenges the relationships between programme producers, audiences, and the means of programme production.* (ibid., pi)

Clearly, if he is correct in his suppositions, then any attempt to communicate something as potentially subversive as the gospel must presumably be in a paradoxical position : the medium is in the broadest sense serving the state, and the message is very often challenging the individual to question the structures implicit in that state, so some sort of compromise would seem to be inevitable.

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<sup>1</sup>. For a fuller discussion of the various alternative views on the relationship between broadcasting and State, see Lodziak (1986), ch.3

## *Chapter One: Introduction*

Taking the relationship between study and change further, Hughes wholeheartedly rejects the idea that knowledge is to do with the accumulation of 'facts' via a process of observation and evaluation which might lead one to a greater (in quantitative terms) understanding of reality. Instead he chooses the path of critical analysis as it relates to any existing approach, whatever the subject matter. As far as media studies are concerned, this means that there is always an element of discrimination present which needs to be countered not by a differently biased discussion within existing terms of reference, but by 'rewriting the agenda', ie by totally restructuring the framework within which the subject is discussed. Thus, taking the treatment of racism in TV, he suggests that there is little to be gained by further data acquisition in itself, because this does not alter the fact that the victims are excluded almost by definition from the agenda; instead, we must radically reinterpret what we mean by 'racism' and adopt an approach to understanding more suited to the content, and this will undoubtedly involve some sort of political change. The view that broadcasting reinforces rather than manipulates is by no means a universally accepted one, however, and indeed, is dependant in turn on the particular set of presuppositions chosen. Evidence is adduced by each side in turn to support their particular stance, whether it be Mary Whitehouse condemning the morally debilitating effects of televised violence and pornography, or the New Left who equally vehemently reject any notion of causation as such. To date, the debate has centred largely on the question of how violence is portrayed and whether it DOES anything to the viewer. This is very closely allied to the distinction between propaganda and persuasion, to which I shall refer later (Chapter 4). For the purposes of this study, I intend to take the line that Hughes adopts, not uncritically I trust, and examine what implications this may have for the communication of a potentially radical and subversive gospel, especially with his next claim in mind, that broadcasting ultimately serves and benefits those who rule rather than those who are ruled ( and it is assumed that these are mutually exclusive categories ). Quite how this might be translated into some sort of 'oppositional' religious broadcasting I shall leave until the final chapter.



### **1.3 Statement of Hypothesis**

The hypothesis to be tested can be stated as follows:-

***Religious broadcasting reinforces existing attitudes whilst failing significantly to challenge.***

The basic premise underlying this research is that existing religious programmes broadcast on British TV do not succeed in having a significant effect on any except those already committed in some way to the Christian faith. In pursuing this enquiry I shall be concerned primarily with establishing an empirical base on which to test the above hypothesis, and secondarily with the theological issues which necessarily impinge on it: this is not to suggest that these are any less worthy of examination, but rather that the perceived need is for a statistically sound contribution to the area of debate. Before embarking on a detailed breakdown of how the investigation is to proceed, however, I shall first attempt to clarify some of the basic concepts used.

To begin with, it would seem prudent to identify just what is regarded as 'religious broadcasting' for the purposes of this research, and what is not. Hence, a number of qualifying statements need to be made:-

1. I intend to restrict my comments to those programmes of an overtly and specifically religious character, produced in the main by specialist teams for the purpose of communicating some aspect of the Christian faith.

2. In so defining religious programmes, I am fully aware that I am excluding more than I am including. A study undertaken at the University of Leeds (Knott, 1984) for example, estimated that 82% of all religious references occurred in non-religious programmes.

3. In addition, there are programmes which, whilst religious, are not specifically Christian, and these are deemed outside the scope of this study.

The justification for this approach lies in the object of the research which is to evaluate the inter-relationship between the content of such programmes in terms of the Gospel, the restrictions imposed by the medium itself, and the nature of the audience, all with a view to establishing

whether religious TV can do anything other than reinforce existing attitudes and behaviour. The fact that I am dealing for the most part with network TV means that the bulk of the empirical work is geared up to collecting data on that particular field, but wherever possible Cable, Satellite and Video have also been taken into account.

#### ***1.4 Impact of Television***

As regards the impact of such programmes, it has long been argued that TV does produce an effect, even if the precise nature of that effect is still in doubt. Claims as to the efficacy of the medium in 'persuading' its audience range from the grossly exaggerated 'bullet' theory whereby an idea is transferred directly from the originator to the recipient, to the negative 'mirror' concept whereby the sole function is to reflect existing social trends - thereby neatly sidestepping any question of moral responsibility. In a Christian context, the first understanding seems to be most closely aligned to the philosophy of the American televangelists, whereas the latter fits better the pluralistic thinking of broadcasters in this country who are acutely aware of the declining relevance of institutionalised religion to the social world of most people. However, both the BBC and ITV companies avowedly offer a service to their respective audiences which is designed to educate, entertain and inform, and it is the apparent dominance of the second of these objectives which poses the greatest problem to the serious communicator - indeed if Postman (1987) is correct, it may not be possible to regard this as anything other than the sole purpose of the medium. Despite this, the religious broadcasters regard themselves as providers of succour to the housebound and lonely, of intellectual stimuli to those who are grappling with major life-issues, and as meeting the needs of those outwith the organised Christian church. It is my contention that the only effective communication probably takes place in the first of these categories, and this opens up considerable questions as to the validity of the medium as a means of communicating the Gospel.

### **1.5 R e s t a t e m e n t o f H y p o t h e s i s**

This, then, is not to be a piece of merely descriptive research: the intention is to isolate significant factors and to assess the relative importance of each. To be sure, there is no claim to be dealing with causation as such, but strength of relationship between variables is at least an indicator of something more tangible, and thus the second half of the study is largely devoted to the findings of an audience survey carried out by the author in the first six months of 1988. This survey was designed specifically with the above hypothesis in mind, but before it could be so tested, it had to be expanded to provide a set of testable propositions such as might logically be held to derive from it, and these are listed below:-

1. Religious TV is watched in the main by people with some degree of religious commitment.
2. Religious programmes are structured to cater for the needs of a basically 'tuned-in' audience.
3. Viewers of such material may well regard it as a substitute for other forms of social interaction.
4. 'Outsiders' are unlikely to watch them unless by accident or coercion.
5. Religious TV reinforces attitudes: it does not change them.

The next step was to operationalise these into a set of directly testable propositions, hence the need to clarify some of the basic concepts used:

"Religious TV" - those programmes produced with an explicit religious aim and displaying obvious Christian content at some point.

"Commitment" - the degree to which an individual structures his/her use of time and other resources in the light of his/her religious convictions. This in turn will probably be dependent on such factors as socio-economic status, religious upbringing and experience, perceived role of the church, and so on.

"Outsider" - one who has no direct connection with the Church as a community of believers, and/or little or no understanding of its basic beliefs. This might include people who attend church only for weddings and

## *Chapter One: Introduction*

funerals as well as those who actively oppose the Christian faith or who subscribe to a different one.

"Attitudes" - the predisposition of the viewer towards life-issues. In the case of the 'outsider', this might be expected to be at variance with stated Church policy, but by no means necessarily so.

"Needs" - those basic desires, overt and hidden, which require fulfilment in the act of viewing. This includes the wish to be amused, informed, reassured, horrified and so on. It is my contention that viewers of religious programmes probably display a common range of needs, primarily those of sharing experiences with others, identifying with the Divine Plan, experiencing empathy, and the affirmation of moral, spiritual and cultural values.<sup>1</sup>

The resultant set of testable propositions then emerged as follows:-

1a. Those TV programmes with an explicit religious aim and containing obviously Christian material, are watched predominantly by people who structure their lives in conformity with their Christian convictions to a measurable extent.

2a. Those same programmes are devised so as to satisfy the need for shared experience, identification with the Divine Plan, experiencing empathy, and the affirmation of moral, spiritual and cultural values.

3a. Viewers of such material do so in place of other forms of para-social interaction which they might otherwise be expected to have engaged in having regard to their socio-economic status.

4a. People having no direct connection with the Church as an institution and/or not sharing its basic beliefs, do not generally watch religious programmes.

5a. Religious programmes so defined effectively reinforce people's predispositions towards life issues: they do not cause a significant change except in conjunction with other (external) circumstances.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on Berger (1982) p.105

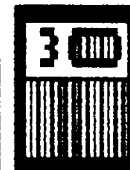
## **1.6 O u t l i n e o f T h e s i s**

Of the various strategies which could have been adopted to test these propositions, one was chosen which effectively combined a theoretical and empirical element. In the first section (Chapter 2), the role of broadcasting in society is examined, using Hughes' theoretical framework as a guide, and the nature of the medium contrasted with that of the message - in this instance, the Gospel. Different attitudes towards television are explored, both in general terms as an agent in the communicative process, and more specifically with regard to its use for religious purposes. Chapter 3 then takes a historical look at the way in which religious broadcasting has evolved over the years, from an essentially functionalist point of view: goals and aims are set against broadcast schedules, perceived audience compared with research findings to date, and some questions raised about the nature of the agenda-setting process. This latter is examined in greater depth in Chapter 4, where the whole issue of 'propaganda' *per se* is put into perspective, leading into the second section of the study which is devoted to empirical findings.

Chapter 5 summarises the results of a fact-finding exercise which took in some 100 organisations involved in some way with Christian television or video programmes, together with a further 50 Cable and Satellite companies, and a number of personal interviews. In the next chapter, the audience for some of these programmes is critically evaluated via a questionnaire survey conducted throughout the UK, and significant variables are isolated. Chapter 7 completes the empirical findings by taking selected religious programmes and considering their semiotic value, while chapter 8 assesses the significance of recently published survey material. The final chapter links both sections together with a forward-look at the way in which the religious broadcasting scene might change in the foreseeable future.

All material of a technical or explanatory nature has been placed in the Appendices so as not to obscure the main flow of the text, and notes will be found at the foot of each relevant page for the same reason.

Chapter Two  
**BROADCASTING  
&  
SOCIETY**



## 2.1 Broadcasting as a Socio-Central Phenomenon

*The broadcasting media occupy a central position in the lives of us all. The majority of people gain from radio and TV the majority of their entertainment, news and political comment. Through radio and TV we absorb and develop cultural values and political stances, and through the combination of those two things we develop a dynamic idea of what our world is all about, and of what our position in it is all about too... it is not necessary to watch TV or to listen to the radio to be affected by them, because even if you're not, many of the people with whom you live and/or work will be.*  
(Hughes, 1981; p. 12/13)

So Hughes summarises the socio-centrality of TV, not so much in terms of projecting images of life 'as it really is', but rather in the way it gives us some idea if we have none on the subject already, presents us with contradistinctive values to modify our future perceptions, or provides us with sensory material which we can use to 'filter' our subsequent direct experience. Thus the question is not simply whether 'East Enders' (or 'Songs of Praise' for that matter) is 'accurate' in its portrayal, but how it influences our appraisal of the content.

Hughes also suggests an interesting relationship between media consumption and the concept of 'free time' which may well have some bearing on this study<sup>1</sup>. He argues that traditional distinctions between waged and free time are misleading; by introducing the idea of 'labour power' (a renewable resource of which we are all endowed) comprising three elements - physical, mental and emotional, he reveals the extent to which the renewal of this resource involves us in maintaining the very power structure that employs us the rest of the time. As he says on page 32,

*Just as our ability to produce the material world is consumed in waged work, so it follows that the (re) production of that ability is itself an action whose primary beneficiaries will be capitalists... Thus our 'free' time isn't 'free' at all.*

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<sup>1</sup> See also Lodziak (1986), ch. 5

Or rather it is free, but only from the point of view of those who are reaping the rewards, not for those who utilise it in their service. The end result as he sees it, is a commodification of the whole communicative process, already begun (he suggests) in the privatisation of the Post Office, and shortly to take another step forward in the shape of broadcasting deregulation. Such an interpretation raises the level of debate from the question "does the gospel sit happily in an entertaining medium" to the more politically involved one of whether it can legitimately take its place at all in a system almost entirely devoted to the renewal of personal profit.

## ***2.2 Broadcasting as 'Information'***

Such a radical view, however, is not shared by all social theorists - indeed, the precise role of broadcasting in society is a hotly disputed one, opinion as to its importance varying in accordance with the theoretical structure adopted. This is not the place to attempt a critique of such theories in totality, but certain points do need to be noted.

In the first instance, the attitude of Government towards the media in general, and television in particular, displays a remarkable lack of coherence as Seymour-Ure (1987) has convincingly demonstrated. Writing in the *European Journal of Communication*, he notes that a policy of non-intervention and disinterest predominates until, that is, an issue of sufficient sensitivity arises, in which case the reactive element comes to the fore and measures are taken to impose (or rather attempt to impose) some measure of restraint. In part, this is due to the peculiarly 'public-service' character of broadcasting in the UK which, until 1969, came under the aegis of the Postmaster General - a "harmless-sounding" figure, "with an image of whistling friendliness and bicycle clips - and without even a seat in the Cabinet" (ibid., p270).

Such ambivalence is in strong contrast to the overtly partisan nature of the Press, and the rather more enlightened view of Cable television (which is intended to be entertainment-led), although even here religious and political groups are prevented from holding franchises. This tendency to remain aloof may well emanate from a belief that the structural stability



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of the medium of itself is sufficient to guarantee that the persuasive effect of television will not be abused. It is also possible that such confidence is symptomatic of an implicit belief that the medium, as Hughes suggests, acts more in terms of reinforcement than subversion irrespective of ideology or content, hence the need for the tacit agreement of other social institutions - including the Church.

Broadcasters for their part often regard themselves as guardians of 'the truth' insofar as they perceive their function in terms of mediating world events, and accordingly lay great stress on the need for objectivity. This seems to derive from the peculiarly paradoxical notion that television on the one hand simply mirrors the 'real world', while on the other is instrumental in shaping that same world. Thus Ranelagh (1985) can say of broadcasters that they "*are a powerful force for moulding public opinion*" in the same breath as claiming that the medium should "*show how life looks*". The intention is to present people with the information they need to make up their own minds, so in his words,

*Being objective...is an enabling quality, not a restrictive one. Objectivity contains the two essential elements of freedom; a desire for truth based on a belief that truth does exist and is real and is practically effective, and a desire for a reasoned conclusion, for being able to make up one's mind logically.* (ibid., p39)

The opposite, he suggests, of such an approach, is the propagandist one - "*bias programmes*" as he has it. These are easily identified because they often have a "*strident, accusatory manner*", deal only with "*selected facts*", are "*visually impoverished*" and "*short on sequences*": in short: "*what stays with the viewer is the tone, often hectoring, convinced and self-righteous.*" (ibid., p40). This may well be of importance when dealing with the specifically informational content of programmes, but begs the question - 'what effect does placing such material in the overall context of entertainment have?', assuming as it does (rather simplistically) that every viewer is equally concerned with, and interested in, watching television so as to rationally form conclusions rather than simply 'be informed'. In particular, as Hood (McQuail, 1972) suggests, it contrasts strongly with the implicit message of the bulk of programme output,

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equally 'propagandist' in its effect. Indoctrination, if it does occur, is just as much a part of light entertainment since:

*it is implicit in the assumptions that underly the telefilms, the teleplays, the comedy shows, which subject the viewer to a view of the world where emotion is supreme and thought (particularly political thought) discounted, where the symbols of success are material and sexual, where certain staid forms of virtue will always triumph over the paper tigers of evil, and fundamentally the individual can best live by accepting the established order.* (ibid, p432)

Another criticism of the 'objectivity' approach is that it tends to disguise the selection process inherent in any programme-making attempt. Ranelagh would, no doubt, argue that a 'good' producer would choose his/her material with the utmost concern for the highest values, but others suggest that in practice it has more to do with political manoeuvring than is commonly allowed for. The decision of the BBC not to screen the Zircon film in 1987, for instance, taken together with the almost complete lack of news coverage of significant Trade Union actions, and the proposed sale of airwaves to media-magnates - all point to a less-than-objective world in which the public is beguiled into accepting a distorted view of reality, and it is this concern that gave rise to the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom<sup>1</sup>

### 2.3 Broadcasting & Accountability

The point at issue here is, of course, one of accountability, and a structuralist interpretation would differentiate clearly between the levels of administration (ie. the legislature) and control, which is in the hands of a salaried managerial hierarchy. Hughes, however, opts for a functionalist approach which has implications not just for the question of accountability per se, but for attempts to monitor effects, which is the purpose of this study.

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<sup>1</sup> This organisation has as some of its objectives:-

- an end to the media monopolies and to gagging legislation and practices
- introducing direct democratic control over the BBC and other broadcast bodies
- making the media more accessible... [source - *Is This The Media We Really Deserve?* (undated)]

Thus,

*the schedules accurately reflect a politics which assumes a working partnership between the state and private capital in the (re) creation of a homogenous society based on private ownership as the 'natural' order of things*  
(op cit., p46)

In other words, the idea of a 'mass' audience is one that originated in the minds of broadcasters for convenience sake, and does not actually exist when it comes to viewer reaction.

This being the case, much audience research falls down precisely because it treats its data as a homogenous entity and fails to identify and isolate critical socio-economic variables. It is one thing to 'discover' that so many people watch a certain programme, and quite another to analyse how background, status, age, sex etc influence the way in which people interpret that programme. Audiences do not comprise numbers of anonymous people who share little experience and are only loosely organised; they are made up of individuals, each of whom takes their cue from a wider social grouping. The 'hypodermic needle' model ceases to be relevant when this is realised, and instead each use and gratification, however defined, has to be culturally implicated. There is broad agreement on the nature of these items - the need to understand our social world, to act meaningfully and effectively within it, and at the same time to have an avenue of escape from it, but little in the way of legitimate empirical work to substantiate them. The following section outlines the three major approaches to media-analysis criticised by Hughes, and clears the way for a more detailed treatment of some of the issues arising out of the tensions between content and context.

#### 2.4 Uses & Gratifications

*As the most persuasive of modern technological stimuli, TV offers greater satisfaction to more appetites than any other medium yet devised, via more alternative modes of expression than we can comfortably deal with,*  
(Baggaley 1980, pxi)

In fact Berger (1982) goes on to identify twenty four such 'appetites' (p105), ranging from the need to be amused, share experiences with others, gain information about the world, believe in magic etc, to the desire to

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experience the ugly and affirm moral/spiritual/cultural values. It seems that, according to this particular stance, television may indeed be the 'horn of plenty' which simultaneously informs the mind, fulfills the emotions and satisfies the spiritual thirst. Not so, according to Postman (1987) though: building on his thesis that television is responsible for the trivialising of all that it deals with, he argues: "*Television offers viewers a variety of subject matter, requires minimal skill to comprehend it, and is largely aimed at emotional gratification.*" (ibid., p88). As far as he is concerned, television is entertainment and can be no other, hence the conclusion that only those faculties associated with the emotional drive are likely to be touched by it.

On a slightly more altruistic note, Fore (1987) suggests that the real 'threat' - for there can be no doubt that, in the minds of many researchers, television does indeed constitute some form of undesirable influence - lies in the tendency of that medium to create an alternative (mythical) reality. 'Genuine' values such as self-respect, will-to-live, and so on are transformed into pale substitutes which combine to create a mental picture or map of the world that cannot easily be distinguished from the 'real' one actually inhabited by the viewer. If Fore is correct, the imaginative needs are not so much fulfilled as obviated due to the way in which television 'does it all', in contrast to radio where the listener can actively engage in the process.

Research in the U.S. (Gaddy and Pritchard, 1985) undertaken in the context of religious broadcasting suggests that this may indeed be significant in understanding the way television works in that country. Evaluating three different models to explain the relationship between watching religious programmes and attending church, the authors conclude:

*In light of evidence that the gratifications obtained from religious television are very similar to those obtained from going to church...and because staying at home with the television takes less effort than leaving home to go to church, the most plausible explanation for this study's findings seems to be a displacement effect mediated by functional similarity.*  
(op cit, p129)

Since there is broad agreement that people do indeed bring their needs, aspirations and prejudices to their viewing habits, and since there is

evidence that some of those needs etc. are being met (at least some of the time), it was decided to incorporate elements of this approach in the empirical work of the present study, the findings of which are described in chapter 6 below.

## *2.5 Effects*

Hughes, in his chapter on 'Issues in Broadcasting Accountability', cites Wright (1975) as speaking in defence of the 'hypodermic needle' model of media effects. Such a simplistic view is, in Hughes' opinion, hopelessly outdated both in terms of methodology and theoretical substance, the whole debate having moved on to lay greater emphasis on the qualities viewers bring to their experience of television rather than what television does to the viewer (Hughes 1981, p48). Unlike Hood (McQuail, 1972) who speaks of 'indoctrination' and 'propaganda' as discrete, objective realities, he insists that the proper subject for analysis is the social context of the audience member - not just as a variable, but more in terms of a determinant in the communicative process. Thus, the problem is different to that identified by Hood: the overt attempt of advertising to suggest that the best way of obtaining social acceptance and emotional fulfilment is "*by drinking the right beverages, wearing the right perfumes, using the right bath salts*" (McQuail 1972, p432), is less important than examining why people react the way they do.

Brooks (1983) similarly plays down the persuasive effect of television, in line with most practitioners associated with that medium, preferring to speak in terms of 'implicit messages'. Such messages may be accepted even if the explicit vehicle is rejected, he suggests, especially when they reinforce opinions:

*Every time I am addressed on the unspoken and unnoticed assumption that my life goal is material prosperity or admiration or security, the more likely it is that this will be the truth about me,* (ibid., p24)

However, his sweeping assumption that everyone's mental apparatus is equally susceptible to these messages is not shared by other analysts such as Berger, cited by Brown (1985) in his talk to the British Film Institute.

Rather than bringing "*malleable, empty, vulnerable minds*" to television programmes, Berger stresses the social context of those minds, in particular the role played by opinion leaders, gate-keepers and others who interact with them. The ideas derived from our primary groups interact - positively or negatively - with the content watched, reinforcing the beliefs we bring to it, and causing us to select from the material available. Unfortunately, according to Silvey (Tunstall, 1970), those who would benefit most from a dispassionate discussion of alternative possibilities - "*the people who do not so much think as rearrange their prejudices*" (ibid., p308), are the ones least likely to pay attention if the environment provided by the programme appears hostile or unsafe. Only when viewers bring a way of life that does not satisfy, ie. one that leaves them feeling insecure or bewildered, are they likely to be susceptible to change.

Such a theory has important implications for the present study, especially given the notion of 'fragility' as defined below (see chapter 6), and is fundamental to the central thesis adopted herein that reinforcement seems to run counter to any idea of a gospel message that challenges the viewer. In consequence, the questionnaire survey which forms such a major part of that chapter, and indeed the whole study, has been designed to test the hypothesis as far as is possible within the constraints of a piece of empirical research.

## **2.6 Audience Studies**

*The answer to the question 'what do we do with broadcasting?' is, then, that we select from it but not merely by choosing certain programmes rather than others and exercising our freedom to switch off what we do not want. We also select by varying the attention we devote to what is before us and, more subtly, by perceiving it selectively.* (Tunstall 1970, p308)

The insight that the 'audience' consists of more than a large number of like-minded people lumped together into a mass aggregate, is a relatively recent one, and breaks with the nineteenth century concept of 'mass' which either ignored or minimised the possibility of social interaction. Hughes documents the transition displayed in McQuail's writings from glib acceptance of the 'mass' principle in 1972, at which time he could

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confidently speak of the four functions people put television to - diversion, companionship, reality exploration and surveillance - to the more guarded approach inherent in 'Communications', published three years later. The terminology similarly shifted through this time from 'market-research' and 'consumer' to 'audience-study' and 'participant'. Brunsdon and Morley (1978) represents perhaps the first in a new genre of such studies, mercilessly breaking down stereotypes in complete contrast to the programme presenters under scrutiny who persisted in constructing their audience in accordance with their own value-systems: the authors portray these figures far from objectively -

*'I hope you don't mind me coming into your home in shirt-sleeves', oozes presenter Tom Coyne unctiously, assuming a personal contact with viewers grouped in families around the television set. (cited in Hughes 1981, p46)*

Other studies, especially those undertaken on behalf of the broadcasting institutions, may not pursue this line so wholeheartedly, but they do tend to make at least some concessions to the principle of contextualisation. In the field of religious broadcasting, for instance, Haldane (1978) attempted to link the various factors of loneliness, isolation, and religiosity to media usage. He found that the radio was used more as a source of company than television, the latter being associated more with entertainment in the minds and viewing habits of those interviewed, and (significantly for the present study) that in an increasingly secular society, religious commitment played the most important part in determining how much religious output was watched (ibid., p16).

In the U.S., where the phenomenon of the Electronic Church is well documented, research has tended to focus on specific issues such as the draining effect it may or may not have on established congregations (Gaddy and Pritchard 1985), the extent to which its broadcasting efforts contain politically predictable material (Abelman and Neuendorf 1985), or the leaders themselves (Hadden, Jeffrey and Swann 1981). In the case of those studies which do examine the audience side of the equation, socio-economic factors tend to be emphasised less than the religious aspects of a person's character: thus while 'religiosity' is treated in great depth by Gaddy and Pritchard, Bourgault (1985), and Dunnam (1975) amongst others,

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taking into account such things as personal religious history and beliefs together with religious social life and practises, the viewer's wider context tends to get dismissed rather summarily with statements such as:

*In other words, people who use religious broadcasts tend to be older, poorer, less educated, and more likely to be blue-collar, black, and from the South than the average American* (Gaddy and Pritchard, p124)

It is the intention of this study to take both aspects of context seriously - 'religiosity' has been redefined for the purposes of the audience survey in terms of 'commitment' (hopefully a more accurate index of the extent to which a person's faith is likely to influence both attitudes and behaviour), and socio-economic factors are analysed individually to assess their impact on viewing patterns and reactions (see chapter 6 below).

### *2.7 Three Critical Approaches to TV*

#### *2.7.1 The Moral Argument*

In this country the National Viewers and Listeners Association, and in the U.S. the Moral Majority, have spearheaded campaigns aimed at making people more aware of the 'dangers' of television, backed up by a not insubstantial body of empirical research. The longstanding argument over effects, centres on the extent to which the content of programmes can be directly related to a rise in undesirable individual (and social) behaviour patterns. In particular, it is the amount of violence and pornography which gives greatest cause for concern, coverage of South African civil disturbances (for instance) being held responsible for similar outbreaks of disorder in Handsworth, and so on. The argument rests on a rather shaky foundation, namely that:

*messages and ideas communicated on television are injected into malleable, plastic, receptive minds and that the receivers are at the mercy and under the control of those communicating the message* (Brown 1985, p2)

Colwell (1984), paints a disturbing picture of the way in which television draws the viewer in, renders him/her passive, and then proceeds to shape the person according to a "thoroughly secular world-view". The rapidly



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changing images on the screen reduce the observer to a "zombie-like" state in which the only response can be one of "quiet reverence for the stupefying spectacle before us"; statistics are adduced in support of the argument:

*In 1982 it could be said that the average American watched T.V. between 50,000 and 75,000 hours during his lifetime; that is, between approximately 5 and 8 entire years of his life; or up to 1/6 of his entire waking life,*  
(*ibid.*, p22)

and research findings are evinced as proof that a heavy diet of television does influence behaviour - at least among children. The conclusion can only be that a "radical spiritual surgery" is needed to deal with the source of addiction: either switch off, or "get rid of the set" (*ibid.*).

### **2.7.2 The Philosophical Argument**

One stage removed from the criticisms levelled at the undesirable effect television has on the moral fabric of society, is the line of reasoning which says that there is something in the way that the media have developed that gives cause for concern. Jacques Ellul is a leading exponent of this argument, and a brief resume of his thought on the subject may serve as a useful introduction to the relevant issues.

According to Ellul, technological society (ie. society in which technology ceases to be a 'tool' and instead become instrumental in shaping the very social structures themselves) is characterised by unintentional, and unforeseen, side-effects. The rate of change inherent in such a society is such that any course of action will necessarily result in a large number of consequential changes, only a few of which can ever be predicted, and since the media are dealing with information transfer (in the broadest sense), they will cause repercussions above and beyond those intended by the broadcasters.

There is, in addition, another dimension to the problem, namely that the phenomenon cannot be treated simply in objective terms: the process is animated to the point where confidence comes to be placed in the technological process itself, rather than those participating in it, causing it to take on an almost messianic significance - hence the use of the term

'Technique'<sup>1</sup>. Thus, rather than turn to religion for possible answers, members of a technicised society look instead to the mechanisms which enable that structure to exist in the first place. Such delusion, Ellul argues, results in an inability to distinguish the nature of the forces at work, and a weakened sensitivity to matters of ethical concern - hence, in his own words:

*When one switches from entertainment to reality, it doesn't stir up any reaction, Rapes on trains and muggings on the Underground are always in the news, without provoking a reaction from viewers; of course, they have seen the same thing on TV a hundred times already.*

*(Media Development 2/1988, p5)*

The argument becomes more persuasive and, from the perspective of this particular study - most pertinent, when the nature of television itself is examined in more depth. Being an image-dominated medium, almost to the exclusion of anything else, the viewer is caught up in a world where seeing is believing ( a point dealt with more fully below - see section 2.7.3), and that which appears on the screen is held to be true. The net result is, in effect, a blocking of all 'true information', because the viewer is unable to contextualise those images either contemporaneously or historically. The word, responsible for bringing all things into being, is not able to engage effectively in their transformation because the medium works against it.<sup>2</sup>

### 2.7.3 The Structural Argument.

A third line of attack exposes the weaknesses inherent in the media, irrespective of how they may evolve or be appropriated: in the same way that a particular mineral or chemical compound is suitable for some uses and not others, so too is television fitted only for certain tasks - short of radical transformation, that is.

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<sup>1</sup> Fasching has this to say in explanation of Ellul's use of the term; writing in Media Development (2/1988, p.8), he says "*Religion is humanity's way of bringing itself into harmony with sacred power. Today technique is the bearer of sacred power, while mass media have become the mediators of a mythos and politics a form of ritual activity - all of which function to conform persons to the sacral order required by technique.*"

<sup>2</sup> For a full exposition of this argument, see '*The Humiliation of the Word*', Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1985

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Among the most frequently referred-to shortcomings of the medium are, the speed with which images change, leaving little or no time for reflection; the way in which information is packaged into 'Headlines', itself a throwback to the telegraphic era; the tendency to trivialise; and the relative inaccessibility of the means of production to all but a few. These, and more, can be subsumed under one main argument - that television is about entertainment, and entertainment is about power.

Valle, in his keynote address to the Central Committee of the World Association for Christian Communication (1987)<sup>1</sup>, stated unequivocally that "*Entertainment is power*". Basing his claim on the theoretical work of Rubem Alves, he argues that there is no need for force to be used in affluent societies in order to maintain stability - instead, the "*senses can be conquered*", and apparent choices multiplied, leaving power structures intact behind the scenes.

Thus: "*By accepting the entertainment values of the media, we implicitly strengthen the power of those who control the media.*" (ibid., p2). Compare this statement with those made by Hughes and Postman below -

*In a capitalist society, . . . (our Labour Power's consumption), . . . results in the perpetuation, . . . of the capitalist mode of production, . . . through which workers are exploited to create profit, (Hughes 1981, p32)*

*It is in the nature of the medium that it must suppress the content of ideas in order to accomodate the requirements of visual interest; that is to say, to accomodate the values of show business, (Postman 1987, p94)*

Since our 'free-time' is increasingly taken up with watching television, and since television is inevitably caught up the prevailing power structures, the viewer is presented with material which of necessity must be put into an entertaining format before it can be televised, and which prevents him/her from ever encountering 'true information'. In this way, hegemony is accomplished with little or no overt outward pressure to conform, and in Postman's words, we are 'amusing ourselves to death'. The implications this has for any attempt to communicate seriously via television, and in particular to communicate the Gospel, are the subject of the section immediately following.

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<sup>1</sup> Reproduced in full in *Communication Resource no. 10*, WACC, July 1987

## 2.8 THE MESSAGE

### 2.8.1 The Gospel Defined

Εὐαγγέλιον, or literally 'Good News', is a key term in the New Testament, and one which has its roots firmly in Old Testament tradition. Indeed, Jesus himself explicitly made the connection when, according to Luke (4<sup>16-30</sup>), he took up the scriptures in the synagogue at Nazareth and startled all those present by claiming a God-given right to appropriate the words of Isaiah for himself:

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; therefore He anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to captives, and new sight to the blind; to send away crushed ones in deliverance; to preach an acceptable year of the Lord,*

*(vv 18, 19 King James II Version)*

Such good news is, however, rarely referred to without an associated call to repent and/or believe, there being a clear understanding that the benefits of such promised salvation cannot be conferred unless the recipient is prepared to act in faith, laying aside his/her own understanding, wealth, prejudices, or whatever else prevents them from identifying fully with the giver. It is this **conditional** nature of the offer which is of particular interest here, since the direct association of Gospel with 'challenge' is central to the critical evaluation of the medium through which it is to be communicated. No further attempt is made here to justify the connection (ie. between Gospel and call to commitment), since that would involve lengthy exegesis, and no claim is made for exclusivity of interpretation, but rather the position is held as a working assumption in order that the thesis can be tested.

The Gospel has been variously described as "*making its appeal from earthly weakness to earthly strength*" (Colin Morris, 1986), a "*challenge to a new kind of living at very great cost*" (Mollie Batten, ITA 1964), and an "*announcement...to the poor that they are the new people of God*" (Carlos Valle 1987); such descriptions are useful insofar as they shed light on the nature of the poverty in question, but fall short of the more detailed analysis of Beeson (1972) who listed eight significant points related to the nature of the message. These can be summarised as follows:-

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1. "This is God's world" and hence "the universe is neither accidental nor arbitrary...".
2. "God is present and active in his world" and "those who wish to become aware of God's presence and activity must seek it within this world...".
3. "God has a plan and purpose for the world".
4. "God's plan for the world moves nearer to its realisation whenever human beings accept one another in love."
5. "God's plan and purpose is, however, frequently thwarted by the presence in this world of forces or influences which run counter to the creative power of love."
6. Jesus presents us with the clearest possible evidence that "those who face evil with love are liberated from bondage to evil".
7. It is open to everyone to experience such freedom "through identification with Jesus".
8. The complete manifestation of the Kingdom cannot be expected within "the timescale of human history", but must "await the end of time".

(ibid., pp22-28)

Even accepting these principles as a basis for communication, we may still only have some idea of the content of the message, not the audience - and it does not explain why proclamation is regarded as a necessary dimension of the Christian faith. As the WACC statement contained in 'Communication Resource' No. 8 (July 1986) declares, we are living in an age of extreme media involvement, and people's attention may well be 'displaced' from the point of view of Christian values, so:

*In a positive sense, a space has to be cleared within this new world for the preaching of the Gospel. The Gospel must be communicated in symbols, models, images and words which are accessible to each culture and understood by it. Otherwise it does not get communicated at all.*

(ibid., p3)

As to underlying motives, it is to this question we now turn.

### **2.8.2 The Communicative Imperative**

Just as the Gospel itself derives from the New Testament, so the command to preach it also takes its authority from that source: Both Matthew (28<sup>19</sup>) and Mark (16<sup>15</sup>) bear witness to the fact that Jesus himself instructed his followers to take the message into the whole world, Mark

adding that this would result in a fundamental separation of the hearers: "the one believing and being baptized will be saved. And the one not believing will be condemned." (16<sup>16</sup>, King James II Version). Paul, too, stressed the immediacy of the need in his letter to Timothy: "preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; convict, warn, encourage with all long-suffering and teaching." (2 Tim 4<sup>2</sup>).

For the Christian, proclaiming the Good News is no optional extra, neither is it the preserve of some spiritual elite - it constitutes a fundamental part of his/her basic calling. Such activity involves both privilege (a sense of being 'called' and 'chosen'), and responsibility (towards a 'lost' world); it should never cause the Christian shame, but may well produce hardship and suffering.

This analysis, if accepted, demands of the communicator more than just a desire to impart information; it expects an identification with the hearer, a feeling of compassion for the audience, and an attitude of faith towards God. In a person-to-person context, there is no logical impossibility attached to these conditions, and traditionally there has been a presumption that such a setting is the norm as far as communicating the Gospel is concerned. To be sure, the written scriptures have also been accorded primacy - especially in Protestant theology - but never at the expense of inter-personal contact. The difference in a media-saturated culture is that the 'normal' means of imparting information has become the impersonal, one-way medium of television, and one effect of this has been to marginalise such traditional methods of communication as preaching and personal witnessing. Those working within television are, to an extent, bound by the limitations of that medium, and reinterpret their task accordingly, but those who regard the visually-dominated methods as inappropriate to the work of promoting spiritual awareness, tend to remain aloof from these attempts and critical of them. The following sections outline some of the main arguments adduced by each side in the debate.

### ***2.8.3 Arguments For the Theological Use of Television***

Among those who hold a positive view of the medium, in the sense that they are largely uncritical of it, and regard it predominantly as a communicative tool, are (predictably enough) the religious broadcasters

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themselves, together with those closely connected with the institutional structures. Their enthusiasm varies from grudging acceptance of television per se, to an active encouragement of its appropriation for theological purposes, continuity being provided by a commonly held belief in the legitimacy of their intentions. An example of the former stance is Colin Morris who, in an article replete with throw-away lines such as "*We religious broadcasters...are like millionaires preaching the virtues of poverty from the back seat of a solid gold Rolls Royce*", still manages to summon up enough confidence in the system finally to reach the rather shaky conclusion that:

*I suppose all that is just a pompous way of saying we religious broadcasters will persist with the business of trying to do the impossible for the very practical reason that it is only through the TV screen or the radio receiver that millions will ever see or hear anything that sounds or looks even remotely like the Gospel,*

*(Media Development vol, XXXIII, April 1986)*

On the other hand, Knott (1984) cites Louis Palau as saying:

*I like to believe that God allowed the invention of television, radio and mass printing, not to sell soap and cornflakes, but to present the truth of God to the millions and millions in the world,*

*(Knott 1984, p62)*

The middle ground is occupied (in general) in the UK by the denominations: the Church of Scotland Report to the General Assembly in 1987, for instance, spoke of an "*exciting, but disturbing, new TV world*" (s5.14) in which the Church had to fight for its interest in religious broadcasting while being appreciative of all efforts in that direction so far; and the Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr Robert Runcie), speaking at Kent University in 1986, argued that -

*religious broadcasting does not need to be defended as pandering to the esoteric hobby of a significant minority. It is essential to a balanced diet of broadcasting which takes seriously every aspect of human activity,*

*(Runcie 1986, p14)*

According to this view, difficulties are not so much ignored as minimised - viewer participation in televised worship is acknowledged to be essentially limited, but attempts to involve audience members (such as

'This is the Day') are welcomed as legitimate experiments in creating a worshipping community of the air; programmes featuring hymn singing, rather than being derided as 'lowest common denominator religion', are in fact praised because they represent a common culture - albeit the 'last great remnant'. Direct evangelism is discounted on the grounds that television is a service industry in a pluralistic culture and, in any case, runs counter to the 'ethos of the media'. Runcie concludes:

*I think religious people often have a tendency to expect religious broadcasting to do what they cannot do themselves. My own expectations are more limited and seek to reflect the realities of society, the place of religion and the constraints of the media themselves and of broadcasting structures,*  
*(ibid., p.25/6)*

#### **2.8.4 Arguments Against the Theological Use of Television**

Proponents of this view fall, generally speaking, into one of two camps - those who regard television as an inappropriate means of conveying a serious message, and those who see it rather as inherently harmful or evil. Separating them is not so much a continuum as a gulf, opinion being polarised at either extreme; those regarding the medium as inappropriate may reluctantly agree to work within its constraints, but those at the other end of the scale entertain no such thoughts of compromise - for them, the issue is too fundamental.

Morris (1986), in his critique of the phenomenon of religious broadcasting entitled 'Love at a Distance', singles out two particular aspects of television for attention which mitigate against any attempt at true communication: these are firstly, the impossibility of broadcasting an incarnate, self-disclosed message; and secondly, the way in which viewer-response is precluded by the very nature of television. Illustrating the latter point, he surmises: "*Even as he or she talks, I could cut my throat and lay down in front of the screen and die and the rhetoric would surge on remorselessly.*" (*ibid.*, p40/41). This 'one-way' aspect is also stressed in the writings of Harvey Cox. Effectual transfer of information requires a transmitter, some data, a method of transferral, a recipient and, most significantly for the purposes of this argument, a means of advising the initiator that the message has been correctly received - feedback. Personal communication, so long the means whereby values and knowledge were



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imparted, manifests all the essential components, but the mass media are distinguished, in part at least, by their inability or unwillingness to measure the degree to which the content of their output is actually received. This being the case, it would seem illogical to attempt to convey a message, at the heart of which is a conviction that God is demanding some sort of response, through a medium which mitigates against even the possibility of such an occurrence.

Knott (1984) cites Longley in connection with a third weakness, namely that since the Gospel is preached from a position of weakness rather than strength, any 'success' in terms of popularity is not success at all, but misplaced enthusiasm, and it must mean that the 'hard words' are missing. This presents us with a conundrum:

*If these assumptions are correct, are we not bound to admit either that the Christian message on TV is most successful when it is measured by low audience figures...or that the Christian message simply has no place on TV?*  
(Knott 1984, p64)

Drawing on the works of Kierkegaard, two writers (at least) have drawn similar conclusions to those outlined above, using as an illustration the following story in which a circus proprietor attempts to warn his audience that the tent is on fire. The man entrusted with the task fails initially, and is sent back to try again...

*he called to the people : 'Come on, the place is burning, hurry or you will all perish' - but they still held tight, - because the man who was calling 'For Heaven's sake move, the circus is on fire', the man the proprietor had chosen to carry the message, was the clown,*  
(cited by Sproxton in ITA 1964, p51, and Runcie 1986, p10)

This analogy is close to the argument put forward by Postman (1987) when he says that the problem with television is not that it contains a preponderance of entertaining material, but that **all** material is presented as entertainment. So long as people regard it as the conveyor of trivia, no danger ensues; the problem arises when television claims to be serious and rises above its accepted status - in such a situation, as a self-appointed carrier of important cultural conversations, it is indeed dangerous.

Moving to the other extreme, several writers detect in television an underlying spiritual threat which manifests itself in a variety of ways: at

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its most benign, or least dangerous, it comes across in the wealth of advertising - both explicit and implicit - offering the viewer a whole panoply of instant-gratifications; in its most undesirable form, it becomes a second God in the hearts and minds of its adherents. Logan (1979) connects the two when he says: *"TV is demonic to the extent that it suggests that happiness and belongings are ultimately obtainable through our own efforts."* (ibid., p154). Behind these criticisms seems to be a conviction that television affects the viewer at the level of the mental processes in a way which is not immediately discernable by the person concerned. Kerckhove (1982) is in no doubt that this is in fact the case, going so far as to claim that television *"shapes the human nervous system according to its own very specific patterns"* (ibid., p258), creating in the process a 'magnetized' mentality which causes the viewer to modulate information rather than reflect on it. Colwell (1984), on the other hand, sees danger less in the structural effect of television, and more in the secular diet it offers. This, he cites Perrotta as saying, *"deadens our reactions"* and lulls us into a secular slumber (ibid., p25). He does, however, share Kerckhove's concern over the way in which the viewer is mesmerised by the constant succession of images - *"bits of trivia"* as he has it - and to that extent would agree that the threat is a neurological one. Since the waves of the electronic media *"suffuse the atmosphere we live in"*, we cannot escape their effects according to Lee (1986), and just as the evangelist bids us open our hearts to receive God, so we open our ears and eyes and receive the media: the only difference being that

*We don't need a special house topped with a steeple to commune with the second God, He comes into our homes every day and takes his place beside the family,*  
(ibid., p9)

The argument reaches its zenith in the writings of Muggeridge (1977). As far as he is concerned, the media have *"provided the Devil with perhaps the greatest opportunity accorded him since Adam and Eve were turned out of the Garden of Eden."* (ibid., p15). Television is bound to deceive because it is an instrument in the hands of the Great Deceiver. In 'Christ and the Media' he builds on this proposition by postulating a fourth temptation: Lucius Gradus the Elder, an enormously rich Roman tycoon, hears Jesus

speak and is so taken by the message that he makes him an offer he cannot refuse - the star role in a TV film. Jesus, however, does refuse, on the grounds that he is concerned with truth and reality, not fantasy and images; his own drama is to be centred on the Passion and Resurrection. There is no room for compromise when such high values are at stake, and the only way round this particular epistemological problem is to dismiss it as unceremoniously as the first three.

Muggeridge, however, is in the minority, and religious broadcasting carries on unabated wherever resources permit. In the following section, the situation as it pertains on both sides of the Atlantic is examined, and an attempt made to highlight some basic differences between them.

## **2.9 P R A X I S : T H E U . K . A N D U . S . C O M P A R E D**

In January 1988, the BBC screened a TV film entitled 'The Vision'. It purported to deal with a hypothetical, sinister, religious organisation which would stop at nothing in its attempts to beam the Gospel message into the unsuspecting homes of Europe via satellite; in practise, it bore a remarkable resemblance to the way in which certain televangelists are perceived to operate. Indeed, the film's director - Norman Stone - freely admitted that he intended the production as a "*warning blast*" to the citizens of the UK<sup>1</sup>. Unfortunately from the point of view of objectivity, however, certain elisions resulted in a failure to draw attention to fundamental differences between the US and UK which might have a direct bearing on the plausibility of the film's main assertions. Some of those differences are outlined below.

### **2.9.1 Structural Differences**

At present in the UK, deregulation is just a threat (or promise); what this implies is that television output continues to be subject to certain legislative and pragmatic limitations until such time as Parliament decrees otherwise. The Broadcasting Acts stipulate who is to provide programmes,

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<sup>1</sup> cited by Wright in *21st Century Christian*, February 1988

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how they are to be distributed, and what sort of service - at least in broad terms - is to be made available. In the US, where the 'Enterprise Culture' has been in existence much longer, legislative controls in particular are relatively light; there it is possible for an individual to own a TV or radio station, raise funds through direct public appeals, and broadcast without the need to achieve either objectivity or balance. In the field of religious broadcasting, this has paved the way for evangelically-minded dynasties outwith the mainstream denominations, generating enormous sums of money in the process, which not only propagate a particularly narrow theology but extend their influence into areas of social concern such as health and education.

Even given that, sooner or later, deregulation must come to the UK, the fact remains that on this side of the Atlantic it is the denominations which have shaped the face of religious broadcasting over the past 35 years, with the assistance of CRAC<sup>1</sup>, and hence the structural ties that have been established are not likely to disintegrate overnight. In practice, the fact that 25% of programmes now must be put out to tender alters this situation very little, since the only production houses likely to prove acceptable are those having established links with the broadcasting institutions. (see chapter 5 for a fuller discussion). Added to that, there is the relatively slow take-up of cable television in the UK compared to the States<sup>2</sup>, with little likelihood of the situation changing dramatically in the foreseeable future, and growing uncertainty over the viability of DBS given the inability of suppliers to agree on a common standard. Technically, it may well be possible soon for anyone with sufficient funds to 'reach Europe' via satellite; pragmatically, such a person (or organisation) would need to satisfy as yet undecided trans-national legislative requirements, place their material alongside well-established public service religious broadcasts, and do so with no real guarantee of a potential audience.

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<sup>1</sup> Central Religious Advisory Committee

<sup>2</sup> According to the National Religious Broadcasters (NRB), there were 221 religiously-owned stations in 1987, compared to one in 1962, and nine cable services offering between two and 24 hours per day, to upwards of 75 million subscribers. Servicing those networks, NRB lists 414 production companies. (statistics taken from TV World, June/July 1987 p11)

### **2.9.2. Cultural Differences**

Thomas Moloney, reviewing Elvy's book 'Buying Time' in the Catholic Herald (27/6/1986), summed up the feeling of many theologically sensitive people when he had this to say: "*Jesus is not for sale. His Church must not be for sale.*" Going on to pose the question, 'is the Electronic Church heading our way?', he answers by citing an anonymous Anglican bishop - "*Our best protection is the basic irreligiousness of the British people.*". Others, pursuing a similar line of argument, point to the output of UK religious broadcasting as evidence that

*'religion' nowadays consists mainly of a Betjemanesque regard for church architecture, a liking (without much experience) for hymn singing,... and a vague respect for the trappings,... with God appearing very much as an afterthought if at all,*

*(Chris Dunkley writing in the Financial Times, June 20 1979)*

If true, then the British viewing public, used to a diet of 'sentimental popular songs', is unlikely to be impressed by the sort of rhetoric offered by American television. In that country, the boundaries between religious and, for example, nationalistic imagery are blurred to the extent that: "*Wittingly or unwittingly, political leaders draw upon the view of the United States as a New Eden or Promised Land.*" (Goethals 1985, p155). Hence the presidential press conference takes on a certain ritualistic significance, with the central figure adopting the role of minister in the pulpit, and the words endowed with an almost spiritual authority. The televangelist is able to 'succeed' in such a context because the authority-figure is crucial to American culture, especially when endowed with a charismatic character at home in such a 'show-biz' world.

### **2.9.3 Ecclesial Differences**

To speak of a 'theology of the Electronic church' would be as misleading as it would be to suggest that religious broadcasting in the UK is all the same; underlying both claims is a residual truth, namely that there are a number of threads running through both phenomena which give the impression of sameness, but at the same time there is a wide variety within the overall matrix. Noone (1987), writing about American religious television, distinguishes two main types of programme - the 'dangerous' and

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the 'dull'. The former make good use of the medium, but at the expense of theological fidelity; the latter, steadfastly refusing to be "*seduced by the imperatives of the medium*", make for "*very earnest, and very, very bad television*" (*ibid.*, p31). The problem is, she says, that the form is antithetical to serious messages: the televangelists get round this by maximising on imagery:

*close-ups of people weeping, swooning, laughing, hugging - miracles promised and delivered on the spot - even audience participation, as viewers are encouraged to reach out and touch their TV screens for a quick healing...*  
(*ibid.*, p33)

but they have almost nothing to do with religion. In place of theology there are "facile slogans", awe gives way to carnival atmosphere, and ritual is stripped of any solemnity; the heart may be quickened, but the mind is sent to sleep.

Hendricks (1984) lists twelve characteristic features of such programmes, ranging from a belief in the joint authority of scripture and experience, through conviction in the saving work of Jesus, to a 'nostalgic ecclesiology'. What, it seems, the viewer is offered, is a series of certainties which can be appropriated here and now with guaranteed effect, in direct contrast to the pluralistic, rationalistic offerings of mainstream denominational Churchianity which merely provide food for thought.

In the UK, only the 'dull' programmes are permitted, content being determined by a combination of legislative restrictions and long-standing practice, much to the chagrin of the Evangelical wing of the Church as well as members of other faiths. In line with the recommendations of the Pilkington (1962) and Annan (1977) Reports, which clearly recognized the needs of a multi-faith society, religious broadcasting here falls firmly within the remit of public service programming and is, therefore, obliged to meet stringent requirements for objectivity and balance. Such a broad approach is defended by Eric Shegog (Religious Broadcasting Officer, IBA) on the grounds that it is necessary to reflect the pluralistic nature of contemporary society. The 'oblique' way in which belief is portrayed is not an attempt to sell religion short, but represents the best method of communicating spiritual material; on the other hand, - "*Those who use television like an electronic soap-box only preach to the converted.*"

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(Letter to Sunday Times, 20/9/1987). Knott (1984) points out that there is clear evidence that the process of secularisation has been accepted by the broadcasters - at least implicitly. It is reflected in the dominance of ecumenism, which regards only the controversial cults as deviant, thereby reinforcing common ground shared by all mainstream denominations, and giving the impression of a largely featureless, standardised religion; and it is evident in the strong social emphasis at the expense of parables, proverbs, reward and punishment, and supernatural dimension - all the hallmarks of televangelism in fact. What is also clear is that there has been no attempt to build up any sort of 'church of the air', (although 'This is the Day' did, perhaps, move gently in that direction), since this would be counter-productive to all parties concerned. As Turner-Smith (undated) notes:

*If being a Christian involves belonging to a community of like-minded people, . . . is it acceptable for a viewer not to belong to a neighbourhood church? Is part of the essential nature of belonging invested in the interchange between one member and another member? (ibid., p28)*

Perhaps the fact that, in the US, there has been greater progress towards an electronically structured society than in the UK, encouraged as it has been by the enormity of distances involved, means that people there are more prepared to forgo face-to-face contact in the communicative process, and hence see no theological reason why this should not be carried over into the church; or perhaps the extensive telephone-counselling services offered by the Electronic Church provide greater satisfaction than superficial (albeit personal) congregational relationships. Whatever the reason, the threat to churches in the UK comes not from an electronic alternative, but from their own marginalisation combined with the simple fact that increasing numbers of people prefer to spend their Sundays in other ways, not least being entertained by television. A Marplan survey in 1986 revealed that while 79% of adults (over 15) interviewed believed in God, and 73% thought religion was important, only 11% attended church once a week; the reasons given for non-attendance were 'watching television' (43%), 'influence of parents' (34%), and failure of the Church in some way (24%) (statistics quoted in 'The Universe', 12/12/1986).

However, despite the differences, there are in certain similarities which

bear closer examination, both in terms of the audience, and of the broadcasters - actual as well as potential.

#### **2.9.4 Audience**

People bring many different expectations and prejudices to their viewing, and those who watch religious programmes are no exception. Various needs have been identified by researchers: companionship, entertainment, information and, in this particular field - inspiration, each one customised by virtue of personal belief structures and value systems. In this country, Haldane (1978), among others, has examined the use made of programmes by people, especially those who could be regarded as lonely or isolated. Taking these factors in conjunction with a third - religiosity - he concludes that while television is used to a certain extent for company, the radio is used in this way to a much greater extent; the most frequently named programme in this context was (surprisingly) 'News at Ten'. Overall, viewers were more intent on finding amusement, irrespective of religiosity or isolation.

In the States, Bourgault (1985) found that most persons in her survey (an exclusively church-based sample) could be profiled as 'religious entertainment seekers'. This finding needs to be qualified on two counts: firstly, the only programme to be used in the research was 'Praise the Lord Club'; and secondly, the work was limited geographically to the small city (population 4,400) of Nelsonville, Ohio. Only one respondent evidently looked to the programme primarily for inspiration and support, rather than to the local church, the vast majority treating it as a source of "*diversion with a religious bent*" (ibid., p94). Far from being an 'opiate of the masses' in a Marxian sense, though, a study by Thomas (1985) suggests that the content of such programmes is subject to social-class variations. Taking a sample of 23 broadcasts, she found that 14 were orientated towards the working-class (eg. 'Rex Humbard'), 6 towards the working-middle-class (eg. 'The Old Time Gospel Hour'), and 3 towards the upwardly-mobile (eg. 'The 700 Club'). Within the first group, piety and devotion were stressed over and above professional accomplishment, the same principle of 'social functionality' extending up the ladder so that the upwardly-mobile received views designed to rationalise their social position (ibid., p113).



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This tendency to tailor material to suit audience profile is seen quite clearly in the UK, where 'Songs of Praise' offers its largely middle-class viewers a fare of familiar hymns in equally familiar settings, interspersed with personal interviews, in contrast to 'Highway' (whose audience comprises 43.9% social class D/E)<sup>1</sup> which is highly secularised and relies heavily on the personality of its host - Harry Secombe - to achieve popular appeal. Such shallow theology does raise questions in the mind of at least one critic however: Chris Dunkley, who regards himself as an "irreligious viewer", accepts that such a "homely concoction" might well bring comfort to some but, at the same time, feels that the avoidance of anything to do with "real organised religion" can only bring the churches into disrepute with the thinking public (*Financial Times*, 20/6/1979). He continues -

*What television lacks now, and has lacked in all the years I have watched, is a programme devoted to the fundamental questions about religious belief: Does a God exist?,,What is faith? If God is love, who made mosquitoes?*  
(*ibid.*)

When people were asked (Gunter, 1984) what they thought the main functions of religious programmes were, the answers show little in common either with Dunkley, or with the American research findings. Apparently the audience themselves regard them primarily in terms of serving people who are unable to attend church in person, and 'escapist functions' - ie. entertainment, relaxation, etc. - are hardly mentioned at all; only in Scotland did a majority of respondents acknowledge a teaching role. Thus, while it may be true that audience needs appear to be similar in the US and UK at one level, it cannot be assumed that these needs are equally transparent to all: indeed, there seems to be considerable discrepancy between self-determined requirements and those deemed appropriate to others.

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<sup>1</sup> Source for audience profiles - 'Songs of Praise', Dec. 1984 (BBC Internal Report), &  
<sup>2</sup> 'Attitudes to Sunday Evening Religious Broadcasts on TV'; Gunter, B., Dec. 1984 (IBA Report)

### 2.9.5 Broadcasters

Martin Wroe, writing in 'The Independent' (23/12/1987) is in no doubt that the UK is on the brink of a minor revolution in religious broadcasting: he warns - *"A combination of deregulation in the main networks, growth in the cable-TV system and the launch of Astra means that American-style Christian TV may almost be upon us."*

As far as 75,000 cable subscribers in Swindon, Ealing and Croydon are concerned, it already is: Vision Broadcasting present a weekly offering of televangelical highlights together with a small amount of domestic material, and have plans to supply six more cable companies during 1988. In addition, there are at least twelve<sup>1</sup> Christian production companies operating throughout the UK, and in early 1987 the European Religious Broadcasters group was formed. David Clark, CBN's marketing vice-President<sup>2</sup>, attended their second meeting, and is quoted as saying

*At the ERB, I think we saw the small group that is always at the beginning of a revolution. These are tough people; they've listened to 'no' for 20 years, and now people are beginning to say, 'yes, we'll open it up for you'.*  
(TV World, June/July 1987)

So far, there is no effective infrastructure to support these fledgling organisations, but clearly there is no shortage of conviction even if finances are somewhat tight. Robin Rees, president of the 120 member ERB, regards the pooling of resources as a priority if the group are to tender for one of Astra's transponders. If they fail, it is not inconceivable that some televangelists, faced with declining revenue at home, will look increasingly towards Europe as a new market, and put in a bid themselves. Several of the British groups take great care to distance themselves from their American counterparts: Dales TV and CVG TV claim to espouse an indirect approach which presents Christianity subtly within the context of entertainment. Direct preaching and proselytism are out. Nevertheless, most of the programmes produced by these companies utilise the magazine format so common in the Electronic church, and it is hard to avoid the conclusion

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<sup>1</sup>, By February 1988, this figure had risen to in excess of 40, according to David Willcock in 'The Listener' (11/2/1988)

<sup>2</sup>, Christian Broadcasting Network

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that many domestic efforts merely aim to achieve a culturally acceptable equivalent, rather than a materially different programme type.

The tensions between these potential broadcasters and their Establishment 'rivals' are evidenced by the fact that no production to date has been accepted either by the BBC or IBA; their work is regarded as 'narrowcasting' by the institutions; and they in turn are regarded by the Evangelical wing as a "*Goliath to be defeated*" (Willcock, writing in '*The Listener*' 11/2/1988).

What is clear, though, is that given the opportunity, there are many Christian groups in the UK who would enter the broadcasting arena, with or without the approval of existing programme providers. The reason why they were effectively excluded from the production process in the first place, is the subject of a later chapter (Four); the purpose of the chapter following is to evaluate the praxis of religious broadcasting in the UK as it has evolved to date.

Chapter Three  
A  
FUNCTIONAL  
PARADIGM  
OF RELIGIOUS TV



### ***3.1 Who is producing the images?***

There is a very simple answer to this question and a not-so-simple one as well. Superficially the correct response would seem to be, 'two public corporations, the state-controlled BBC and its independent equivalent, the ITV companies' as represented by the IBA. However, as soon as those words are uttered it becomes obvious that institutions by themselves never produced anything; what we mean is that certain producers, editors, camera-operatives, lighting personnel etc., etc. have conspired to put together certain discrete items to form a package for consumption known by the label 'religious programme'. However, even now we have made certain assumptions, namely that the BBC does so in a different way to its counterpart by virtue of its status, hence the distinction between 'state' and 'independent'. One might even suggest on the strength of this that the former can be relied on to give a more objective, unbiased, sensible, undramatic view of religious reality than the latter, tainted as it is by the private capital that forms its life blood. To do so would be to miss the entire point of Hughes' argument. Both companies are implicated in the political structure and both are susceptible to demands for popularity and entertainment: one only has to compare the two literary organs which purport to inform the viewer of his or her 'choices' for the week to see the bankruptcy of this particular notion. This is what Gramsci means when he speaks of 'hegemony', not that the broadcasting institutions are part of the State's coercive apparatus in an obvious way, but that they engage with others such as the legal process, schools, church etc., in the process of investing people with a particular 'world-view' which itself ensures the stability of that social formation. When one traces the historical development of religious broadcasting, it would be easy to make the mistake of attaching too much importance to the ebb and flow of evangelical ideals for instance, and thereby to ignore the far more fundamental drift of value-reinforcement implicit in all broadcasting. Certainly there are trends which would indicate increasing secularisation both among the policy-makers and practitioners which will become obvious later in the chapter, and this is only to be expected. Traditionally,

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religious broadcasting has been the treasured possession of a select few; Reith set the standard for many years with his personal interpretation of the role of broadcasting, and his mantle was taken up by a succession of similarly-minded men, the practical outworkings being entrusted to a body of largely clerical staff, (most noticeably so in the case of the BBC who developed the concept of a Religious Department considerably in advance of its counterpart), advised by a wholly clerical Advisory Committee, responsible to a carefully chosen Board of Governors, and ultimately responsible to the state financially. These constraints are reflected in early schedules, dominated as they are by low-cost, theologically conservative and uncontentious material (See Appendix I). More recently, it is clear that theologically the ground has shifted both in terms of output and of personal belief systems among practitioners who are less likely to embrace a Reithian position than they are to espouse a pluralistic, if not humanistic, approach.

#### *3.2 For whose consumption?*

The avowed aim throughout the history of religious broadcasting in the UK has been to produce programmes with three different audience types in view. These are generally spoken of as the 'committed', ie the functioning Church member, the 'interested' - those who are outside the Christian community for a variety of reasons but who equally like to keep abreast of current issues, and the 'uncommitted' - a category which might include such diverse elements as members of other religious groups, atheists, agnostics and so on. This is the view of the producers of such programmes, but it is one which finds little confirmation either in schedules or audience research. Even amongst those who perpetuate such a distinction, there is an awareness that in fact most programmes can be categorised in terms of the first two and very little attempt is made at effectively communicating with those from the third, which can hardly be described as surprising if Hughes is correct in his functional analysis. I shall attempt to illustrate this point by surveying the literature which has flowed from the pen of those involved at the media end before briefly discussing two IBA audience research documents specific to the case.

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1960 "Hearing, Seeing, Believing" : BBC

Page 10 of this booklet speaks of the audience of broadcast church services as including *"many who, through old age, infirmity or family responsibilities, are cut off from active participation in the life of their local church."*

Page 11 refers to another category, namely *"those on the fringe of the church or outside it...[and] other groups."*

1962 "The Hearing Ear and the Seeing Eye" : BBC Scotland

A slightly more sophisticated statement appears on page 5 - *"the broadcast production of church services aims at helping the house-bound viewer to be there, 'in the gallery'",* thereby acknowledging the limits of participation. The 'outsiders' in this instance are catered for by such series as 'Why I Believe' and 'Its my Belief' in which *"men and women of outstanding christian maturity give their reasons for belief."*

1964 "Take Care of the Sense" : Roy McKay, SCM

McKay introduces us to the tripartite division of audience into 'believers', 'indifferent', and 'interested' and notes that *"generally speaking, I am sure there is very little significant communication of Christianity to the indifferent by radio or TV."* Further, he clarifies his understanding of this type of viewer by suggesting that:

*the 'indifferent' are 'anti-authoritarian'. Many of them are anti-clerical, because they identify clerisy with authoritarianism. They are ready to accept the responsibility of their own search for meaning and truth. They suspect the motives of all modern persuaders, but are open to an honest examination of any moral situation, including an examination of their own motives and attitudes.* (ibid., p47)

In support of his own policy of broadening the scope of religious programming, he argues that there are those *"who identify religion with what goes on in a church building, and if we had accepted a full measure of that sort of programme, they might have found it easier to resist one's claims to other kinds of programming."*

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1964 "Religion in TV" : ITA

One contributor to the debate of which this report provides the official summary was Miss Mollie Batten, Principal of the William Temple College at Rugby. Speaking as a viewer she made the following comment -

*frequently I find myself confused when I look at a TV service, Often I am not quite sure whether it is meant for the hale and hearty, like me, or whether it is meant solely for people in hospital; and/or I sometimes wonder whether the primary aim of the congregation is the worship of God in which any viewer may become interested and possibly involved or whether it is a special way of demonstrating a pastoral concern for the ill and/or the old and/or the lonely.* (ibid., p17)

(note the mention for the first time of that particular category - ie. the 'housebound' - so beloved of religious audience researchers).

At the same conference, the Archbishop of Canterbury, speaking in reply to Kenneth Harris who had asked him what types of people he felt were in an audience when he appeared on TV, stated quite simply: "*We must be trying to reach every single one of them*" (ibid., p21). He then went on to express the view that his task was to talk to the casual watcher as much as, and at the same time as, the conventional Christian.

1968 "Vision and Belief - Religious Broadcasting 1957-68" : ABC

In which Penry Jones speaks of his misgivings over the drive for 'popular' religious programmes :

*the unanswered question is this : will a truly religious programme - that is, in my view, a programme genuinely attempting to say something disturbing, different, unpopular - ever be able to command a regular audience?* (ibid., p54)

1970 "Religious Broadcasting" : Kenneth Lamb (BBC)

Lamb cites another example of viewer response from the William Temple College :

*From a visual point of view, there is only one Church, Its head is the Pope, for whom all its members pray, Its services are held in an Anglican Parish Church,...it sings the great hymns of Charles Wesley...It is proud of the achievements of the Church of Scotland's Iona Community.* (op cit., p8)

1973 "Broadcasting, Society and the Church" : General Synod

To all intents and purposes the main source for 'official policy'. Para 99



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of the same cites an audience research project undertaken by the IBA in 1968 and published 2 years later under the title "*Religion in Britain and N. Ireland : A Survey of Popular Attitudes*". According to this, "religious broadcasting reaches 2/3 of the population and...56% of viewers claim to 'pay attention' to (it)...while a further 24% 'leave the set on but don't really listen'".

Para 104 reiterates the now familiar split into audience types - the great majority (ie uncommitted); committed Christians looking for a 'supplement'; and committed Christians who are prevented by illness or age from attending church. The labels may change, depending on who is writing them, but the content remains the same. On the strength of this insight, the authors compiled a table to compare audience type, programming aim and programme type which can be found in Appendix II.

1983 "Communicating Conviction" : Peter Brooks, Epworth

*On bad days I am inclined to say that there is nothing much wrong with the Church's communication to those outside their ranks - except merely that we are answering questions which have not been asked, we are doing it in a language which is not understood, and doing it in places where nobody is listening anyway.*  
(ibid., p11)

### **3.3 Audience Research Findings**

Turning to pertinent audience research, we are reduced at present to two sets of findings, one of which is extremely provisional, entirely unofficial and of limited value anyway; these are the report mentioned above (IBA, 1970) and its much more recent update<sup>1</sup>. Leaving aside obvious criticisms such as the failure to go beyond the 'mass audience' philosophy, and the limited scope of the latter exercise, it is possible to draw the following tentative conclusions. Firstly, the number of people with a positive 'religiosity' index has declined substantially, although Scotland is still more pious than its southern neighbour, albeit marginally : from a national total of 49% in 1968, there has been a fall to 39% in Scotland (including 12% extremely religious) compared to 36% overall.

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<sup>1</sup> Subsequently published under the title '*Godwatching: Viewers, Religion & Television*', Libbey 1988

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Of the total, some 36% in Scotland attend church services regularly and 61% feel that the amount of time given to religious programming on TV is 'about right', another 25% however regarding the output as insufficient. When it comes to the sort of people that do watch religious programmes (or, to be more accurate, are likely to), the consensus is that churchgoers come first in the list - as they did in 1970, those who need comfort second - with the same % as before, and 'anybody' in third place. The only type to be perceived as less likely to watch is the non-churchgoer (13% cf. 25% previously).

Attempting to compare figures for the next question - "which kind of person do you think religious TV programmes **should** be for", is made more complicated by the fact that the results are so different as to suggest some structural defect rather than any changed perception. Regular churchgoers received 21% votes (cf 8% in 1970); occasional, 24% (52% - combined with 'others'); non, 30% (36%); and Don't Know, 22% (4%). Perhaps these figures taken with the previous set indicate a growing perception of religious TV as serving its own interest group, or perhaps it merely reflects the inward-looking nature of those programmes. Certainly only 19% of respondents felt that its job was to provide services for those who can't get to church (cf 47%), and only 7% (34%) saw its aim as making people stop and think. Nevertheless, 94% people still regarded Songs of Praise as religious, and 50% took the same view of Everyman. A fuller treatment of these surveys has been reserved for a later chapter (Eight).

#### **3.4 F o r   w h a t   p o s s i b l e   p u r p o s e ?**

Whilst the answer might have changed since Reith took his stand, it is only the answer and not the function itself : as I have already argued, religious TV insofar as it takes its place in the wider broadcasting nexus, is inexorably bound up with reinforcing existing power structures, so any stated purpose cannot afford to be in conflict with that function. To be sure there has been a marked shift away from the early evangelicalism that was the hallmark of Scottish TV especially, but the question needs to be asked - was such directness permitted through ignorance of the medium's underlying role, or was it allowed in full knowledge that it was bound to

'fail'? It is with this in mind that the following historical excursus must be interpreted.

The Television Act of 1954 did not so much ban propaganda outright, as place it under the jurisdiction of the ITA as it then was. In the same breath that public appeals were to be vetted, so "*any religious service or propaganda relating to matters of a religious nature*" were also (op cit., s 3.4). It is no accident that the potentially subversive aspect of TV was recognised so early on - any means of communication runs the risk of being appropriated for less than noble ends, and this one was held to be especially potent. This explains why in 1960 the official BBC line was extremely reserved in its treatment of religion: quoting from the publication of that year we have the following statement -

*It [broadcasting] can present the challenge of Christianity, It cannot by itself fully involve any individual in that challenge, A full commitment can only spring from an acceptance of denominational loyalty,*  
(BBC 1960, Foreward)

Perhaps another reason for this reticence is the fact that from earliest days, Britain was still considered to be a Christian country with Christian ideals very much uppermost in the minds of everyone. Hence Sir William Haley could say in 1948 in his capacity as Director General that the BBC's policy was firmly grounded on this assumption and consequently, "*the whole preponderant weight of its programmes is directed to this end*" (ie. supporting those inherent values).

Also by 1960, the two aims of religious broadcasting which form the continuing theme of most writing on the subject, are clearly established. These are - "*to support and strengthen the faith of those who are fully committed to the life and work of the churches*" and "*to reach those who are on the fringe of the Churches or outside them.*" (BBC 1960, p10). For the first category, there were the broadcast church services from the 'mainstream of historical Christianity', and for the latter, "*a number of programmes*", albeit sparsely represented.

In complete contrast, the Scottish offering of two years later (Broadcasting Commission Scotland, 1962) makes no effort to conceal its zeal - here the primary purpose was:

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*to bring the Christian gospel, Sunday by Sunday, day by day, to the homes of every parish in the land, so that men, and women, whether active or housebound, may be strengthened by the Christian Faith or challenged to think again about its importance for daily living. More specifically, to meet the pressure of modern technological life by presenting programmes of Christian teaching, in cooperation with the Churches, about the relevance of the Faith to living in a scientific age.* (ibid., p2/3)

Secondly, the broadcasters saw themselves as responsible for informing the nation of those events which were deemed to be of significance, a role which was not emphasised elsewhere. And thirdly, the document speaks of 'growing points' in relationships between the Church of Scotland and its worldwide fraternity which were to be reflected - the Iona Community again? Far from being an organ of state coercion, they saw themselves as nothing other than the 'Church's hand-maid', a claim explicitly refuted by others who perhaps had more respect for their institutional hierarchy. Roy McKay (1964) cites the Pilkington Committee in order to highlight the problem which was rapidly becoming evident in the increasingly secularised world of religious broadcasting -

*We think it would be unfortunate if [it] became used for proselytisation, but on the other hand the explicit exposition of a doctrinal standpoint must be permitted if [it] is not to become anaemic.* (ibid., p35)

Clearly the Archbishop of Canterbury also recognised the conundrum when he came down firmly on the side of presenting a challenge at the ITA conference in 1964: the question was posed, "To what extent do you think the church should be using TV to evangelise, to make converts, to get people in?", and his reply - "I would say that all the things we were talking about were evangelism.". Not only that, but when pressed as to whether he regarded the TV camera as an 'evangelical instrument', he replied "Oh entirely so, entirely so." (ITA 1964, p22/23).

Penry Jones, writing four years later and reflecting on his time as Head of Religious Broadcasting at the BBC had this to say -

*We were not concerned with propaganda or bulldozing people into believing Christianity, but with open programming which left people free to make up their minds,...I think from the reaction we got that people began to realise that religious broadcasting wasn't trying to sell them something all the time.* (ABC 1968, p24)

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Maybe so, but people, being people, have a habit of **wanting** to be sold something, and in the same publication, Ian Mackenzie justified the ITA's experimental Christmas offering for 1967 with the following words -

*In ratings terms we thrashed BBC's simultaneous 'Carols from King's College, Cambridge'. For theological reasons I think we performed a service in doing that, I yield to nobody in my love of the King's College sound, but it had become an overwhelming pseudo-cultural stereotype of Christmas feeling - an opiate inhaled slavishly in every parish church up and down the country.* (ibid., p42)

Strong words, but still firmly within the structuralist tradition I would suggest.

Continuing the sober tradition of BBC utterances, Charles Curran speaking to a Religious Weekly Press group in 1970 had the following to say in the aftermath of the screening of Dennis Potter's 'Son of Man' -

*we are concerned reflectors of the world we live in, responsible in our freedom and balanced because we live by balance and by perspective, and we are lost without them. We do not seek to usurp the spiritual and moral authority of the nation's leaders, ecclesiastical or temporal.* (Curran 1970, p15)

In other words, there is no accountability, or at least no-one who will take responsibility. Kenneth Lamb echoes this conviction when he quotes Pilkington as saying:

*the BBC has to take account of the fact that we no longer live in a monolithic society but in a pluralistic one. Religious and moral beliefs, social attitudes and conventions, are no longer as widely shared as they used to be... The BBC cannot ignore the changes taking place in society. It cannot turn its back on manifestations of dissent simply because they will displease some viewers. It has a duty to report to society what is being said and done by society.* (Lamb 1970, p11)

A mirror can only reflect and therefore is not responsible for what it shows.

These feelings are summed up by Trevor Beeson in 'An Eye for an Ear' (SCM, 1972) :

*it must be emphasised that neither the BBC nor the ITA see themselves as handmaidens of the churches. It is not their function to assist in recruitment to church membership or even to contribute to the making, or keeping, of Britain Christian. Their task is to inform, educate and*

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*entertain and religion will only find a place on broadcasting schedules for as long as those responsible for broadcasting believe it to be important enough to a significant number of viewers and listeners to justify the use of expensive resources.* (ibid., p87)

The protected status has been finally stripped away and the secularised medium calls the tune. The General Synod, when they met in the following year to discuss the aims of religious broadcasting, however, seemed unaware of the change. Blind to the new power structure, they persisted with the established aims which are by now well known - to reflect mainstream worship, thought and action; to highlight significant points of contact between faith and the modern world; and to reach those on the fringe (General Synod 1973, para 103). Perhaps, though, they were not so much blind as confident that really nothing had changed, hence the following statement in para. 116 -

*To say that the Church ought not to adopt a policy of conversion through broadcasting is not to say that it should not evangelise, Evangelism is rather a matter of interpreting man's deepest needs to him in every situation, showing something of God's provision to meet those needs, and inviting him to accept it and enjoy it in the fellowship of the Church.*

Honest statements of the problems inherent in attempting to resolve the tensions inherent in religious broadcasting are few and far between. I shall draw this brief survey to a close with two very different views of practitioners in the field. The first is Colin Morris, writing in Media Development in 1986 (vol XXXIII):

*We religious broadcasters seem perilously close to putting into reverse the Johannine assertion that the Word became flesh. We take flesh-and-blood human beings, put them in front of a microphone or TV camera and transform them into disembodied words or ghostly images...we broadcasters are the body snatchers of our time, offering speech without speaker, image without presence, contact without personal engagement.*

Not only that, but the Gospel which should be preached from weakness to strength, finds itself in a power structure in which the relationships between producer and viewer are precisely the opposite, hence...

*we religious broadcasters are committed to an absurdity...we are like millionaires preaching the virtues of poverty from the back seat of a solid gold Rolls Royce.* (ibid.)

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At least however, there is still conviction that the job is still worth doing despite the absurdities and paradox; when we turn to Stuart Miller (Producer, BBC Scotland) who addressed a meeting of the Edinburgh Humanist group recently (9/11/87) on the subject of religious broadcasting in the next decade, there is the awareness of inherited policy guidelines, but no conviction - the new generation of TV producers are "*neither clerical nor Christian*" and are therefore well equipped to "*keep out all that...over-the-top, hyper-religious...stuff*". To be sure, Miller is not entirely representative of contemporary religious broadcasting, but he is characteristic of secularised TV in its attitude to what it perceives to be religious propaganda, an issue to which I shall now turn.

## Chapter Four

# PROPAGANDA OR PERSUASION?





#### *Chapter Four: Propaganda or Persuasion?*

**pröpagă`nda** *n.* 1. Association or organized scheme for propagation of a doctrine or practice; (usu, derog.) doctrines, information, etc., thus propagated.

**prö`paglāte** *v.*...3. Disseminate, diffuse, (statement, belief, practice),

[Concise Oxford Dictionary]

*"It is not fair in a country where liberty of religion is a precious tradition... to seek to persuade people to change their minds religiously."*

[spoken by John Whale, BBC, during interview with author]

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### **4.1 The Legislative Framework**

The 1981 Broadcasting Act [section 4(5)] states that -

*Except with the previous approval of the Authority, there shall not be included in any programme broadcast by the Authority -  
(a) any religious service or any propaganda relating to matters of a religious nature,,.*

The definition of propaganda offered by the Concise Oxford Dictionary, in its somewhat restrained interpretation of this heavily 'loaded' term, does little to shed light on why precisely such an authoritarian line should be adopted with respect to the spreading of religious ideas. The full picture emerges only when the historical context is examined, revealing a remarkable parallel between fears expressed some 34 years ago and those vocalised now: then, the threat came in the form of a proposed commercial challenge to the monopoly of the BBC; more recently, the advent of DBS (Direct Broadcasting by Satellite) and cable TV has spawned new fears of commercial, deregulated, competition. In both instances, the power structures involved are the same: the broadcasting institutions, the churches, and the perceived 'enemy' - American-style free-marketeering. It is the purpose of this chapter to explore the historical context to the current debate.

### **4.2 Post - War Suspicion**

Writing in The Times in April 1952 under the slogan 'Leave well alone', the Bishop of Bristol (the Rt. Revd. F.A. Cockin) entered a debate initiated by Lord Halifax some months earlier by expressing the view that if commercial television were permitted, standards would certainly fall. He (Cockin), was to prove a key figure over the next two years in co-ordinating the campaign on behalf of the churches and BBC against 'sponsorship' and, when that failed, in the follow-up strategy designed to ensure that power would remain where it always had rested - with CRAC. The following 'log', loosely based on a comprehensive if superficial account in Wolfe (1986 p. 513ff), but drawn primarily from the official parliamentary record - Hansard,

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outlines the main stages in that campaign, culminating in the successful attempt to get the above s.4(5) clause written into the Bill.

#### *4.3 Diary of Events: June 1953 to*

*October 1954*

- June 1953. The issue (Commercialisation) becomes a party-political one with Attlee threatening to reverse Churchill's proposals for an independent system.
- July 1953. Earl De la Warr (Postmaster General) tells the House of Lords that a White Paper is forthcoming. The British Council of Churches (BCC) issues a Press Release which condemns any such proposal, however stringent controls might be, on the grounds that it would imperil all the BBC's achievements to date. The Archbishop of Canterbury (Fisher) declares that the BBC monopoly belongs to the people, not to the State, and condemns the commercial principle as irresponsible. Free Church leaders (T.W.Manson, Hugh Martin, Donald Soper), write a letter to the Times, describing it as "*unnecessary, unwanted and unwise*", further suggesting that the Government ought to declare a free vote in the Commons. Only the Catholics via The Tablet venture to suggest that a continued monopoly might not be the best solution, it being an issue of "*freedom of speech*".
- November 1953. White Paper (*Memorandum on Television Policy, Cmd. 9005*) published.
- The National Television Council accepts that an effort had been made to meet criticisms, but still maintains that it does not want advertising. In contrast to the *Memo of the Report of the Broadcasting Committee, 1952 (Cmd. 8550)*, which had advocated banning religion and politics "*so as to remove religious broadcasting from any market activity and make the purchasing of air time by richer religious groups impossible*", the White Paper recommended that a

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parallel group to CRAC advise the new authority. Fisher, speaking in the House of Lords (25th November), expresses dismay at the disproportionate length of time American viewers were spending in front of the television, asking -

*is it wise to multiply opportunities of spending time in this way at the expense of other possible occupations for reasonable and intelligent persons?*

*(Hansard, col, 555)*

Commenting on the suggestion that CRAC should be duplicated, he felt sure that the churches would insist on some sort of consultative machinery, but was equally adamant that one committee would suffice.

In a Party Division, the resolution to register dissent fails by 87 votes to 157, all four bishops supporting the minority view.

December 1953. The BCC, realising the inevitable, commits itself to Fisher's suggestion of a combined advisory body in a statement sent to De la Warr. As Wolfe (1986, p515) says,

*this marked the beginning of it s [BCC's] special role in the formation of government policy regarding the place of the mainstream churches and the emerging second authority,*

January 1954. David Gammons (Asst. PMG) invites the BCC to a meeting, made easier by the close links existent between CRAC, Francis House's department at the BBC - Religious Broadcasting, and the executive of that body. The delegation included Bp. Wand of London, and Cockin in his role as Chairman of the BCC Commission on Broadcasting. When C.B. Mortlake (Daily Telegraph churches correspondent) suggested that the Assembly should welcome the White Paper, Cockin replied with considerable invective that this reflected the "*shallow, partisan and blinkered view that the BBC was a 'state sponsored monopoly'*" (ibid., p516).

February 1954. De la Warr assures the BCC that the Government intends to propose that CRAC should advise the new Authority, and

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there will be no question of religious bodies being allowed to 'buy time'. As yet, it is not clear who will provide the programmes - the Authority or its companies. Fisher, in a letter to Say (BCC General Secretary), warns him of the

*danger of early attempts by "one denomination or another to capture a programme company" and present CRAC with a fait accompli over which it could only act as censor and not adviser,*  
(ibid., p. 517)

Despite assurances that programme companies would make time available for religious broadcasting without charge, Fisher wanted production to be carried out by the Authority to avoid CRAC having programmes 'fed' to it.

March 1954. Television Bill published.

The National Television Council registers strong disapproval, maintaining that the BBC is quite capable of providing an alternative public service if necessary.

June 1954. De la Warr writes to Cockin:

*the Authority and their advisers have both the power and the wish to ensure that religious subjects are handled in a fitting manner,...[such few religious services as were planned would be financed by the Authority and he (the PMG) was],... beginning to feel that the authority will have to employ a churchman on its staff,*  
(ibid., p. 518)

Cockin and Fisher inveigh against the threat of 'unseemly competition' in the House of Lords, the latter restating his conviction that programmes should be made by the Authority, fuelled by private fears that the ITA might prefer to accept freely given ones from the contractors.

July 1954. House communicates to Cockin the view that it would be better if contractors were encouraged to make religious programmes since production is not within the province of the Authority, and it might help counter accusations of 'protectionism'.

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On July 13th, at 17:40pm, the Lord Bishop of Bristol (Cockin) moves in the Lords that clauses 4(a) and 4(b) be added to the Bill currently before the house with the words:

*I believe that this Amendment is essential to the wholesomeness, dignity and freedom of religious broadcasting, I am thankful to know that Her Majesty's Government are inclined favourably to consider it,...*  
(Hansard, col.889)

Far from being intended to restrict the expression of conviction, Cockin envisages the purpose as being: "to prevent...an unregulated, competitive buying of time in order to sell particular denominational or religious views." (ibid., col.890)

De la Warr explains the reasoning behind the Amendment, referring to his personal belief that CRAC was quite capable of advising the contractors 'correctly', but in face of lingering doubts in "certain minds", welcoming the opportunity of closing any possible loopholes. In his words:

*Now everything is subject to the Religious Advisory Committee, excepting where the Authority otherwise decides...If...[they]...took, as they never have taken, too narrow a view, then, of course, the last word would rest with the ITA. But, having regard to the conduct of the Committee in the past...I do not think any of us could possibly conceive of any difficulty arising,*  
(op cit., col.890)

July 27th: the Lords Amendments are debated in the House of Commons. Mr Ross (Member for Kilmarnock) expresses satisfaction that the Government has taken notice of arguments propounded in "another place" (Hansard, col.318), while Mr Mayhew asks for a clarification of the term 'propaganda': he cites the example of a religious programme which was neither a service nor propaganda which featured a mission in West Ham - was this covered by the Bill?

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(ibid., col.328). The point is taken up by Mr Ross who distinguishes between "pure, formal propaganda" and the "indirect approach", the latter being in the form of bias (positive or negative) over a period of time towards one denomination or another. He says:

*We have created many restrictions because we recognise the danger; but the danger will remain in the shape of people, associations or bodies who are prepared to use television for their own purposes. We must remember that we are dealing with commercial television; that there are people who are prepared to commercialise religion, and that therefore we may well get indirect propaganda,*  
(op cit., col.329)

To illustrate his point, Ross tells the house of the effect produced by Mae West impersonating a member of the Salvation Army, namely to make a laughing stock of that body.

The Home Secretary, Sir D. Maxwell Fyfe, replies that any misgivings should be allayed by the wording of the Amendment which provides for all "matters of a religious nature". Thus, anything connected with religious affairs, however distant, whether associated with a known church or not, would be included under the provisions (ibid., col.330). Since Clause 6 (2,a) stipulated that a representative religious advisory committee be appointed to offer advice on just such issues, the Home Secretary was confident that all dangers had been anticipated, especially since:

*"On this point there has been complete co-operation between everyone interested in the matter..."* (ibid., col.331)

The Amendment is duly agreed to.

October 1954      CRAC reviews the situation: Cockin proffers the view that competition between the two rival companies would be "lamentable"; Payne (Baptist) points out that if CRAC does

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not cooperate, "the ITA would turn to the churches and ask for representatives and the house would almost certainly be divided"<sup>1</sup>; Grisewood makes it clear that "the Corporation wanted no change in the way the Committee was and had always been constituted: **by the BBC and not by the churches**"<sup>2</sup> [emphasis mine]. The Committee finally agree to one advisory body for both companies.

So 'successful' was this arrangement that the first Religious Programmes Officer was not appointed until 1964 - after the new Television Act. As Sendall (1982, p.104) puts it,

*When it came to the point, the majestic and in some ways Reithian CRAC took a puckish delight in treating Independent Television as of equal standing and importance with the BBC. Indeed, when in due course CRAC was confronted by the advice of the Pilkington committee, backed by the strong wish of the BBC, to withdraw its services from ITV, it refused to do so.*

Whether Sendall is correct in regarding their attitude as 'puckish' is a matter for debate; what is clear from the above is that CRAC had no intention of letting control pass from their hands: if commercial television had to be, then let it be subject to the same procedures as had previously applied to the BBC.

#### **4.4 The Contemporary Debate: Two Case Studies.**

In 1987, two separate incidents involving religious television programmes highlighted the fact that the propaganda issue is still very much a live one: the first was the rejection by Channel 4 of Lella Production's television version of 'Jesus Then and Now'; and the second, the decision of the IBA not to screen a documentary about the Salvation Army.

'Jesus Then and Now', a series of programmes featuring David Watson which explored the historical claims of Christianity, was turned down by Channel 4's Commissioning Editor for Religious Programmes - Bob Towler, on the grounds that it was of a low technical standard and contravened IBA policy of not broadcasting anything with a "proselytising" intent.

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<sup>1</sup> cited in Wolfe (1986), p519

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, note 1 above



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Subsequent endorsement of the decision by the British Churches' Committee for Channel 4, in which the programme itself was declared "*inappropriate for national religious broadcasting*", and the campaign of Trinity Trust (the parent organisation) to get the decision reversed was denounced, did little to appease the anger of the Trust's head - Charles Cordle. Frustrated by institutional attitudes, Cordle threatened to take action against the IBA over a related matter - the banning of a series of advertisements for children's Bible story videos, in addition to publicising his feelings in various Christian magazines. Claiming a loss of business amounting to £350,000 he applied for a judicial review of the law as it relates to advertising, which at the time of writing is still to be carried out.

In November of the same year, the IBA took exception to a Salvation Army film - 'For the Love of God', on the grounds that it had not been submitted for approval, and consequently withdrew it from the schedules. Norman Hare, writing in the Church Times (12th November 1987), noted the rather paradoxical situation whereby the same week should see the rejection of this theologically uncontentious offering and the start of the Channel 4 series on Gnosticism. The film in question retold the story of how four men and women, of no particular Christian conviction, became members of the Army: as far as the IBA were concerned, this constituted 'promotional' material; to the producers it was no more than a look at the way that faith (as opposed to their organisation) had transformed lives, being primarily descriptive and informative with no overt attempt made to elicit a similar response from the audience. In a letter from Eric Shegog (Religious Broadcasting Officer, IBA) to Arthur Thompson (Secretary for Public Relations, Salvation Army), three reasons for the refusal were given:-

- 1) it constituted propaganda for the Army
- 2) it was openly evangelical
- 3) the denomination had had its fair share of programmes.

Following this decision, the film was set aside for referral to the panel of religious advisers in December, and subsequently withdrawn completely. On the 11th December, the Sun newspaper carried the following article:

Barmy Ban

The Independent Broadcasting Authority has sternly banned a programme from your TV screens.

It must not be shown now or at any other time.

Is it libellous?

A steamy sex drama? An exposure of our security services?

*By no means,*

It simply tells the story of how three people found Christianity.

It continues:-

The IBA board apparently considered it shocking that, in a supposedly Christian country, men and women should actually be encouraged to become Christians.

It does not want people to enjoy the comfort and support of religion and embrace the virtues of faith, hope and charity...

Such a reaction in the popular press is unusual to the extent that such issues rarely constitute newsworthy material, but does little to allay suspicion that the function of public broadcasting is widely misinterpreted outwith media circles.

#### **4.5 Policy Matters**

Four points emerge from the discourses above:

Firstly, 'propaganda' as a term is in need of clarification. The dictionary definition alludes to a derogatory dimension, based without doubt on a long-standing association with militaristic-inspired ideological attempts to subvert by means of persuasive rhetoric, but it is far from clear that this is what the legislators had in mind when they drew up Section 4 (5).

Secondly, the original cause for alarm was avowedly the possible commercialisation of religion inherent in the setting up of an independent authority: in fact, it appears that the issue was more complex than simply one of preventing market forces from encroaching on the freedom of expression - there is evidence that the institutions (as embodied in the BBC and CRAC) combined to ensure that power remained firmly within the establishment camp.

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Thirdly, the events of 1987 tend to support the theory that the real 'enemy' are perceived to be the Evangelicals: it is not so much a question of denominational ratings as ensuring that particularist theological perspectives are effectively excluded from the schedules.

Fourthly, there is still considerable confusion in the minds of those outwith the institutions - notably the popular press and independent Christian programme producers - over how the system operates. The writer in the Sun, for instance, makes two false assumptions: that Britain is a "supposedly Christian country", and that the IBA is either willing or able to encourage the conversion process.

The IBA, for their part, are in no doubt on the matter. In a letter to the author, Rachel Viney (Asst. Religious Broadcasting Officer, IBA) confirmed that in their view, "*all religious programmes*" constitute propaganda and therefore require approval prior to screening. In particular, programmes which attempt to persuade, or which air a personal view, are prohibited - an attitude which is endorsed by Bob Towler when he expressed the conviction that television is "*not a vehicle for metanoia* (repentance)". In a similar vein, John Whale explained that it was not permissible for the BBC to seek to persuade non-Christians into embracing the faith since this would imply that Christianity is best, and the BBC has no right to make such a claim. However, he then went on to (unwittingly) reveal the inherently paradoxical nature of the policy by arguing that since television is received in a cozy, non-numinous and familiar setting, it is difficult for the recipient to be awestruck. Indeed, attempts to persuade begin with a considerable disadvantage unless the viewer is already predisposed towards God. If so, there would seem little point in prohibiting such attempts, and to an extent, the ban becomes superfluous.

#### **4.6 Some Theoretical Considerations**

Propaganda in a religious context is usually taken to mean proselytisation - an overt or, even worse, underhand attempt to gain new members. Reaction to such a phenomenon is usually strong and invariably hostile, but does it thereby draw attention from a far more insidious process inherent in all broadcasting, the gentle art of persuasion? Peter Brooks for one thinks so,

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and it may prove useful to follow his argument on the subject. On page 24 of his book, '*Communicating Conviction*' (1983), he makes the following assertion -

*On the whole...the propagandist approach to TV is not the one which has most influence...The persuader relates to the uncommitted viewer in a way which is not altogether welcome. He continues, It [TV] is the vehicle of a value system, and it is quite possible to absorb that implicit message about the good life while rejecting the explicit message about the product,*

The nature of that value system is quite clear:

*every time I am addressed on the unspoken assumption that my life goal is material prosperity or admiration or security, the more likely it is that this will be the truth about me,*

According to his analysis, persuasion works through the organs of visual perception in a way which bypasses conscious control mechanisms, and can result in unwitting or blatant imitation. Here we are back in the thorny issue of 'effects', but certainly if Brooks is correct in his citing a member of the Charles Manson gang who said in his defence, "*We are what you have made us. We were brought up on your TV...*" (ibid., p27), then we cannot afford to write off such phenomena as logical impossibilities. Despite this, broadcasters and church advisers alike persist in identifying the threat as being in the form of propagandist messages - indeed, the main reason given by the IBA for not screening '*For the Love of God*' was this very thing. It is interesting to compare their notion of 'propaganda' with that held by François Chevassu:

*the propaganda film aims to impose a political or 'ideological' point of view and to force its spectators to adopt this point of view without thought or conviction, and this with the aim of serving a determinate cause'*

Even accepting that this definition was worked out in relation to the film industry and not television, it does appear that the threatening and subversive aspects which are so central here are markedly lacking in what is generally regarded as 'religious propaganda'.

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<sup>1</sup>, cited in Neale (1987)

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It is hard to believe, for instance, that the Salvation Army film mentioned above was intended to **impose** its point of view in quite the way suggested by Chevassu's definition. The distinction between 'propaganda' and 'information' is made clear by the way in which the latter utilises genuine arguments to minimise the risk of untruth (even by omission), and provides all the necessary ingredients so that the viewer may reach a freely attained conclusion.

Propaganda, in contrast, invariably employs selective material, prevents the possibility of an alternative argument, and appeals to the emotions - not the will or intellect. Essentially, then, it is characterised by rhetoric rather than descriptive or expository material, more at home at the mass rally than in the entertainment-orientated world of television. Two opposing views of how this relates to the practice of religious broadcasting are given by Gavin Reid (1987) and David Holloway (1987) in their respective works. Reid, on page 136, notes the following tendency amongst certain Christian organisations -

*Many Evangelical and other highly-committed theologically conservative groups are extremely dissatisfied with the present situation. They want to see programmes made that proclaim and argue for the Gospel. They want to reach millions for Christ and they believe that radio and television can do it... At this point, however, the enthusiast falls foul of the whole philosophy of public service broadcasting*

Holloway, on the other hand, clearly believes that the reason such groups are excluded from the media is not so much philosophical as political -

*That certain people should have the monopoly or duopoly in the control of the spread of ideas is wrong in a democracy. But this happens and it happens nowhere more than in religious broadcasting... Perhaps one of the reasons why the nation has failed to hear the Christian voice in the Public Square as clearly as it should is that the determiners of religious expression in the media have often been biblical modernists.*

*(ibid., p147)*

This agenda-setting process thus, perhaps, owes less to a high view of public service, and more to a low view of evangelicalism, than is generally realised or admitted. Just as the example of American commercialism sparked off fears about 'buying-time' in the 1950's, so today the perception of televangelism in the States has coloured the attitudes of

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broadcasters and churchmen alike to the form of religious broadcasting. Holloway cites the example of the advice given by the General Synod's Church Information Committee to the Hunt Committee on Cable Television as indicative of a widespread prejudice against the Electronic Church: their report stated that -

*The very phrase has become synonymous with a debasement of religious programmes on television. The advent of Cable and Satellite TV here will expose this country to the same pressures. It is most important to realise that religious programmes relayed by television are potentially more emotive and manipulative than any other type of programming.*

*(op cit., p149)*

It should be noted that no empirical (or theoretical) evidence is adduced in support of this claim, and yet this rationale underlies much of the prevailing attitude towards religious programming. The paradox consists of the way in which on the one hand, television is regarded as an agent of reinforcement, while on the other, great stress is laid on the danger of appropriating the same medium for manipulative purposes.

#### *4.7 The Practitioners*

Wallis (1987, chapter 10) gives some interesting insights into how attitudes towards the issue of propaganda vary amongst those involved in programme production. In general, as will become clear in the next chapter, these depend on the level of integration with the broadcasting institutions, so that those with vested interests - the denominations and religious departments at the television companies primarily - come down firmly on the side of existing policy guidelines, while those outwith these structures tend to be highly critical. He cites Donald Black of the Baptist Union as an example of the former view, interpreting the role of the broadcaster as 'educational' rather than towards "conversion in the traditional rather narrow Christian sense" (*ibid.*, p106). He also found that the term 'proselytising' meant different things to different people: Robin Rees (Media Director, Crusade for World Revival) took it to imply a sectarian approach rather than persuasion per se, the banning of which effectively reduced religious broadcasting to the level of 'information', lacking in any conviction.

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Among those who object to the censorship of religious broadcasting, a common theme is an interpretation of the issues involved in spiritual terms, the real point at issue being not just the lack of freedom to proclaim the Gospel, but the more general extent to which Christian values have disappeared from the screen: 'heritage' is a key term here. Thus John Davies, in writing of the Christian Broadcasting Council, expresses the view that -

*In this country where the Church, under the influence of scientific humanism and materialism, appears to have lost its strength, there is a new awareness among many people of the need to restore moral standards. Programmes devised, produced and broadcast by dedicated Christians could, we believe, aid the process of restoration of these Christian values'.*

A more pointed attack is made by Roger Stanaway in a paper<sup>2</sup> given at a one day conference in September 1984, where the restrictions on religious broadcasting on radio, television and cable are all regarded as aspects of: "the way in which our enemy has robbed us of the freedom to use the broadcasting media in this country.". This innate right to be involved is contrasted with the extent to which non-Christian values have penetrated the media, even so far as to misrepresent the state of religious broadcasting abroad. Stanaway himself uses the term 'propaganda' to describe the actions of the broadcasters in highlighting the excesses of televangelism, turning the argument on its head:

*Very few Christians have any real appreciation or vision as to how TV can be used in many exciting and creative ways acceptable to the British culture. Most will only have been exposed to the enemy's propaganda programmes... We need to recognise, assess and appropriately counter this harmful propaganda.* (ibid,)

What is at stake is the very moral fabric of society, and religious programming is just one facet of this. Some groups intend to combat the erosion by concentrating on the production of biblically-orientated material to counter the perceived scepticism of existing religious programmes;

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<sup>1</sup> taken from a publicity handout (undated) entitled 'Christian Broadcasting in Britain'

<sup>2</sup> 'The Transatlantic Rainbow; Independent Christian Television in Britain' (unpublished)

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others aim more ambitiously at providing an alternative channel which would utilise a mix of programme types to create entertainment 'glorifying to God'. As the organisers of CTV Television put it,

*Just imagine the possibilities of a TV system committed to broadcasting the principles of a society living by God's standards!'*

The assumption behind these sentiments is that television affects people's attitudes and behaviour, and is capable of doing so in a controlled way: at present the effect is harmful because the values expressed are non- or anti-Christian, but given a sympathetic environment, it should be possible to use the medium to improve the moral fabric of society. Whether this is correct or not, a great deal of effort is being expended by various groups to prepare for the day when such experiments are possible, and the next chapter explores some of the aims and achievements of those involved, together with an evaluation of the institutional stance.

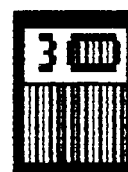
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<sup>1</sup>, Taken from publicity leaflet (undated) entitled 'The Real Alternative'



## Chapter Five

### THE IMAGE-MAKERS



### **5.1 Introduction**

The main thrust of this research is undoubtedly directed towards the way in which the Gospel is communicated via television, but if it were to concern itself solely with that medium, an opportunity of comparing the mechanics and philosophy of this operation with other visual media would be lost. This is the rationale underlying the decision taken early on in the process to contact as many Christian organisations as possible concerned with either programme production, distribution, or both, not only within the broadcasting institutions themselves but amongst the churches and private ventures as well, and covering each of the competing media - television, cable, satellite and video. The resultant exercise involved writing to almost 100 addresses culled from the Christian Directory of Communications (AFCC 1987), another 50 listed in 'Who's Who in Cable & Satellite' (Autumn/Winter 1987), and conducting interviews with selected personnel representing those organisations<sup>1</sup>.

The results of this were as follows:-

1. Of the 98 letters sent in December 1987, 2 were returned by the Post Office, 19 produced no response (despite a reminder), and 77 replies were received. Of these latter, 8 were not helpful insofar as the respondents did not feel able to become involved in the research, 3 were notifications that the company had ceased trading, 10 merely sent a product catalogue or similar, and the remaining 56 contained material of varying degrees of usefulness - from a cursory reply to a thoughtful and detailed consideration of the main issues. It is these which form the substance of this chapter.
2. Of the 51 letters in the second phase, only 17 produced a response, 8 of which could be regarded as being of some value; in general, the response rate was disappointing but perhaps not unexpected in view of the state of flux the industry finds itself in at present.

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<sup>1</sup>, For a copy of the letters sent, and list of organisations and individuals contacted, see Appendix III

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3. Personal interviews were carried out with nine individuals between January 19th and 22nd 1988, each on a loosely structured basis designed to elicit responses in such key areas as the aims and effectiveness of religious broadcasting, (including the importance of reaching the 'uncommitted'), the nature of propaganda [see chapter 4 above], and future possibilities [Postscript].

Rather than offer a descriptive account of these points of contact, it was decided to place them within the theoretical framework outlined above [chapter 2] and follow the functionalist line inherent within that schema. The resultant analysis therefore categorises respondents in terms of their proximity to the broadcasting institutions, and not primarily in regard to their mode of operation although this was usually directly related to their situation. Thus the institutions themselves are central, the mainstream denominations orbit at close range ( along with a small group of informed programme suppliers ) watched over by a number of advisory and watchdog bodies, and the bulk of 'lesser lights' maintain their distance either through ignorance of structural realities or by virtue of their *modus operandi*.

### **5.2 The Television Companies**

There is a consistency of attitude and approach running through the institutional bodies which, despite small local differences, transcends any basic division between 'public service' and 'commercial' operations. This is in part a function of the legislative framework within which they all work, but more importantly, perhaps, it evidences the interconnective nature of the joint religious-advisory machinery. Consequently, the aims of the BBC, for instance, are not very far removed from those of the Independent companies, and 'Songs of Praise' has more in common with its commercial counterpart 'Highway' than scheduling slot.

### 5.2.1 Aims of Religious Broadcasting

#### 5.2.1.1 The BBC

John Whale (Head of Religious Programmes, BBC Television) described these as far as the BBC are concerned as follows: they are: *"to serve all those who are actually or potentially interested in religion and religious ideas"*. Such an all-embracing claim was clarified during an interview, when a more detailed picture of the sort of audience he had in mind emerged. Of the three groups identified in 'Broadcasting, Society and the Church' (General Synod 1973, para 104) he felt the first - housebound and elderly - was rather small and not particularly central, while the other two merged into one another. Being an open medium, producers were obliged to adjust material to cater for the casual watcher, especially since the whole tenor of religious broadcasting was to serve the community, the majority of whom are assumed to be interested to some extent at least in religious matters. Nevertheless, their main concern must be for the professing christian because *"the culture of the U.K. is historically and actually Christian"*. Pluralism is not so much ignored as relativised by the sentiment that *"it is better to tell something substantial about one [religion] rather than fragments of many"*.

Building on this notion of a religiously-inclined audience, Whale recognises that this may not necessarily consist entirely of church-goers, but feels that the majority do still regard this culture with affection and derive comfort from seeing it on television; even those lacking a church connection are liable to entertain God-thoughts during times of stress. On the negative side, what the broadcasters are **not** trying to do is enlarge the christian constituency - there is no missionary sense at all. If, as a result of watching their work, someone were to become more attracted, he for one would be pleased, but the creation of such an effect was not a declared aim. Rather, opportunity should be presented for the viewers to discover more about their own faith and increase knowledge of its content. Religious broadcasters are also in the 'morals business': in the late evening, documentaries such as 'Everyman' and 'Heart of the Matter' report not only on religious manifestations but give a considered opinion on secular questions as well in a moral light. The Religious department is acknowledged to be an expert in these areas - an important point since it

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is assumed that everyone shares a common concern with moral matters even if they are not motivated religiously.

The bulk of programming output is firmly tied into the Sunday schedules, commencing with a children's slot at 9:15 ( currently 'Umbrella' ) - a joint production with the Children's department having a strong multi-faith instructional slant, followed by adult catechism in the form of 'Articles of Faith'. The main worship programme - 'This is the Day' - is an attempt to break free from denominational and structural ties by locating the 'service' in a viewer's home and adopting a self-generated liturgy, a radicalism that is balanced by direct outside broadcasts covering major Christian festivals for the rest of the year. The evening offering, 'Songs of Praise' and its counterpart 'Praise Be!', together with 'Home on Sunday', unashamedly mixes popular sacred music and personal interview to appeal to the largest audience of the week - some 5 to 8 millions. Accessibility is the keynote here, the hymns tapping common experience at least as far as the older generations are concerned, a format which ITV carried to the secular limits when it introduced 'Highway' into the schedules in 1983. This downward trend in specifically religious content during the day is maintained, and indeed rounded off, by the late evening documentary mentioned above. Here religion is used as a lens through which events may be viewed rather than a subject in its own right, and the intention is to make such a world-view credible to all viewers whatever their persuasion.

#### *5.2.1.2 The IBA*

Whilst not a programme provider, the IBA does regulate within the constraints of the 1981 Broadcasting Act, and with the help of its religious advisers exerts a controlling influence on the type of material broadcast. Its guidelines are those submitted by CRAC to the Annan Committee, although as with the BBC there is no formal policy document as such. Rachel Viney (Asst. Religious Broadcasting Officer) expressed the opinion that overall there was a strong commitment to religious pluralism, achieved in practise by counterbalancing traditional worship services with documentary-style looks at life issues in programmes such as 'Human Factor' and the "*painless religion*" of 'Highway', while Channel 4 caters for

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the more esoteric minority interests. In this way the three main aims of entertainment, education and information are met while challenge is provided implicitly in the way lifestyles and ideologies are reflected.

### *5.2.1.3 TVS*

Andrew Barr (Head of Religious Programmes), in a letter to the author, clearly confirmed the stance adopted by the IBA by emphasising the crucial role of CRAC and the move away from exclusively Christian broadcasting to religious programming generally. During a follow-up interview, this position was made clear notwithstanding the fact that there was still a presumption that Christian values were uppermost in people's minds when religious questions were posed. The main concern now was not so much to convey a message of salvation as to bring religion back into the arena of public debate away from the periphery, and to build bridges across which those who are out of touch with the social organisation of the church might pass. An experiment in crude interactive programming had been made at TVS whereby viewers were able to phone in to a church 'service' with requests for hymns, and this had proved successful in terms of calls made, but there was a clear understanding that any further contact with institutionalised Christianity was a matter for the churches, not the television company. 'This is the Day', he felt, had been initiated with a similar goal in mind, but had since moved away from that original concept.

### *5.2.1.4 Scottish TV*

After 20 years as Executive Producer of religious programmes, Nelson Gray retired from the post at the end of 1987. His recollections provided an interesting commentary on the changing scene during that time, reflecting as they do his own personal convictions, but at no point do they seriously depart from the pattern outlined above. He regarded the main objectives of his work as firstly to support and encourage the Christian community in Scotland; secondly to inform **all** viewers of important/exciting/interesting events of national significance; and thirdly to enter into dialogue with those of other philosophies and religions who shared a common interest in the well-being of society. He is unashamedly a Christian doing what he regarded as a Christian job despite growing opposition in the form of

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accusations of propaganda or proselytisation. As he put it: *"I believe religious broadcasting should be motivated with the question 'how is this going to present Jesus most clearly to the viewer'".* The way in which this was translated into the schedules was through programmes such as 'Profiles' in which people reflected on the way God had worked in their lives, 'Come Wind, Come Weather' - an examination of the way in which individuals coped with crisis, 'Songs of Celebration', 'Chapter and Verse' (a sort of Desert Island Texts), and 'House Group' where lay people came together in the studio to share their faith. He expressed a hope that in the future a modern-day Willie Barclay might appear to *"take religion down off the top shelf"*, clearly referring back to a time when a television appearance by Barclay would generate enormous excitement, even among the hard-bitten pubgoers of Glasgow. 'Highway' he defends as legitimate light entertainment in which:

*seven million viewers find... from week to week a source of comfort and hope and joy, certainly better than the heavy gloom and doom of formalism which is draining them away from the churches.'*

His rootedness in the world of 'ordinary people' comes across strongly, and he has little time for theologians' talk; in a further letter - this time to Mr Neale himself (26.10.87) - he again defends his production of the programme: *"I have striven to make Scottish contributions reflect not only happiness and hope, but the beauty and power of Jesus."*

### 5.2.1.5 Channel 4

In contrast to the strong christian conviction displayed by Nelson Gray, the Commissioning Editor for Religious Programmes at C4 (Bob Towler) comes across as a representative of the 'new school' of religious broadcasters - certain that religion is a vital dimension of life, but equally adamant that we live in a pluralistic society where Christianity no longer has any exclusive claims to allegiance. Thus television is most definitely **not** an instrument of evangelism, and any commitment to the 'unchurched' must be couched in terms of *"serving without proselytising"*. The CRAC report to Annan is accepted as the basic working document, and since C4 is a private company, there can be no question of attempting to change people's attitudes either towards religious or for that matter political subjects.

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<sup>1</sup>Quoted from a letter [12.10.87] sent to the C. of E. Newspaper in response to remarks made by Neale

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He strongly defends the independence of television as a medium from governmental and ecclesiastical interference: there is a voluntary panel of religious advisers, but he expressed no desire for a more formal arrangement along the lines of CRAC. Indeed, he suggested that: "*if the churches want to use TV to preach with, let them buy a TV station*". Personally, he sees little point in such an exercise, though, since he regards the medium as far more suited to serving than persuading.

### *5.2.1.6 The Rest*

Replies to the original letter were received from all but two Independent companies, varying in usefulness from the "*have not the time to answer properly...*" of Granada to carefully considered responses from Grampian and HTV. David Hammond-Williams of HTV set out his goals as follows:

*To inform people in Wales (and beyond) of the scope and variety of religious activity in Wales, through events and personalities,*

*To investigate, in varying depth, the strands that make up the Welsh religious experience, on both individual and collective levels...*

*To illustrate the diversity and interest of events/actions/issues of a religious nature to non-religious people, offering them, hopefully, an insight into the inspiration that religious belief can provide,*

This largely informational emphasis was echoed both by the schedules of different companies, and by the declared aims of their staff - Michael Lucas of CTV25 (Channel TV), for instance, spoke of ensuring that "*matters religious have a medium in which they can be discussed...*" and Jean Claude Bragard of LWT went even further when he said

*The underlying policy of our output is to examine religious subjects... from a dispassionate, inquiring and analytical standpoint. We aim to interest both believers and non-believers in the programmes and have sought to avoid treating 'religious viewers' as a minority whose tastes have to be catered for by programmes of interest only to them,*

In Northern Ireland, Ulster TV finds itself in a situation where extreme tact and sensitivity are necessary in dealing with the potentially explosive subject of religion. The programme philosophy there is described in its publicity handout ('*Religious Broadcasting on Ulster Television*'),



undated) as "a ministry of reconciliation", and this is revealed in times of particular tension by the way in which clergyman use the Epilogue slot to "pray for peace and exhort Christian forbearance."

### *5.2.2 Effectiveness of Religious Broadcasting*

John Whale summed up the attitude of all television companies when he said: "We evaluate the effectiveness of our material with viewer's letters, viewing figures, appreciation indices and our own judgement." Religious broadcasting in this respect is no different to any other programming type: success is measured primarily in terms of audience size and level of appreciation rather than the degree to which particular ideas or values are communicated<sup>1</sup>. In fact Whale dismisses the idea that television communicates at all, regarding the process more in terms of "scattering chicken feed"; thus, 'This is the Day' may encourage response in the form of viewer's letters, but very few actually participate (approx. 1,000 per week out of a total audience of some 250,000), and the majority therefore remain largely unknowable. Nevertheless, despite being "unprofitable servants", he feels that the programmes generally "do alright", compared that is to the rest of BBC's output. This opinion is based on the performance of programmes such as 'Songs of Praise' - which holds a large Sunday evening audience successfully against its commercial competition - and the critical acclaim of 'Everyman'. The Religious Department is not regarded as being inferior in any way within the Corporation because religion is still regarded as a valid human pursuit.

When we turn to the Independents, the ratings battle is equally in evidence as a primary indicator of success, although audience feedback is still taken seriously as a function of popularity.

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<sup>1</sup>Data collection is carried out in a variety of ways; audience size, demographic characteristics, and overall share are measured by the Broadcaster's Audience Research Board (BARB), which is common to BBC and Independent companies; more detailed analyses of viewing patterns are made through the regular Omnibus questionnaire surveys of the BBC's Broadcasting Research Department and diaries monitored by the Audience Reaction Service; and qualitative methods may be used to study individual reactions, such as the group discussions conducted by the BBC in 1984 to evaluate reaction to the new-look Songs of Praise.

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The IBA's religious department do not themselves become involved at this level except to the extent that complaints about a particular programme (or type of programme) may be directed towards them in their regulative capacity, but the research staff most certainly do: their job, after all, is to enable the companies to maximise returns in whatever way seems appropriate, and religion is no exception.

Andrew Barr of TVS felt that one major stumbling block to communication was the prevalence of stereotyped images: programmes such as 'Songs of Praise' tend to give the impression that people of faith are extraordinary - he tagged it a "*catalogue of saints*". 'This is the Day' was initiated as an attempt to counter such tendencies by projecting familiar icons - the home, ordinary church members, and so on. It is noteworthy perhaps that the most successful religious programme in terms of audience size ('Highway') exploits this idea to the full, making itself accessible to as many people as possible, albeit at the risk of sacrificing religious integrity.

Channel 4, in theory at least, is not so bound in to the necessity of generating large audiences; nevertheless, effectiveness in attracting and engaging viewers is an important consideration given its commercial structure. That is why Bob Towler was able to comment that the series 'The Gnostics' proved successful, simply because despite its small audience (some 350-450,000), it generated sufficient interest to ensure that the first run of the companion book sold out in three weeks. He was quick to point out that once a programme provider becomes responsible for footing the bills, as is the case with the American televangelists, the measurement of success is even more crucial and he found it difficult to believe that in that sort of context the message itself would remain unsullied.

The final way in which effectiveness is measured is through the comments made by the religious advisers; 'expert opinions' are sought both at the pre-production stage and after transmission in an effort to maintain qualitative control. These are compared with press reviews, and used as a basis for internal discussion during which a programme's format and future may well be decided. One such adviser is Rev. Michael Crawford at Grampian TV, and he noted the limitations of this particular source of input:

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*Come-backs from the public...are useful; a number are quite eccentric, some are simply to commend the writers themselves for a shot on TV; and a few are discerning and challenging in their comments,*

In his own particular experience, his contributions were generally appreciated, even if they were not necessarily acted upon: as he says "I was always given a courteous hearing and told to keep on with the 'advising'!"

None of those contacted were aware of anyone who had been fundamentally changed in their religious convictions as a result of watching a programme, which is not entirely surprising given the way in which religious broadcasting is perceived to operate, but mention was made of people finding hope in times of severe personal distress. Unfortunately, documentary evidence relating to such cases has not been forthcoming, so it is impossible to comment with any authority on their significance.

### **5.3 Programme Makers**

#### **5.3.1 Aims**

In this category, two distinct sub-groups emerge: those companies which are intrinsically close to the broadcasting institutions, both in philosophy and in method; and those organisations established as a direct alternative to the institutions, and to an extent in competition with them. Of the former, information was collected on three companies - Vision Productions in Sheffield, CTVC (The Foundation for Christian Communication Ltd.) in Watford, and Oxford Vision in Oxford. In the latter, four organisations were studied, representing the main thrust of Evangelical effort in the UK at present - CTV (Catch the Vision) Europe, Dales Television, CVG Television, and Spirit Free Communications.

In terms of contributions to broadcast television, only those companies in the first group can be regarded as significant, a situation due less to availability of material than to suitability of content - something not always fully appreciated by the Evangelical contenders. There is no shortage of enthusiasm or conviction amongst these groups, but rather a failure to appreciate the structural limitations of the televisual media.

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### *5.3.1.1 The Collaborators*

Gordon Ramsay of Vision Productions outlined his aim as: *"that of an effective Christian witness in whatever situation I find myself"*. His company produces programmes for a wide variety of clients, from the overtly religious Billy Graham Organisation to the highly secular William Hill group, the hope being that all will recognise his implicit stance. Of the specifically religious material, the majority is targeted towards those to whom he has an affinity - *"people in the main who are quite comfortable and can usually see no need of any sort of 'spiritual crutch', as they would probably describe it"*. These objectives are translated into pilot programmes such as those he is currently working on - 'Omen or Amen' which examines the Satanic influences in life, and 'Don't ask me Why' which sets charismatic worship alongside the chanting of the Liverpool cop for comparison: both are aimed at the broadcast market.

CTVC expressed similar generalised aims when its director Barry Allcott wrote: *"Our goal is to promote the Christian Religion through the broadcast media."* A cursory examination of their work reveals an interesting, predominantly non-controversial selection of documentaries covering such areas as artists and craftsmen at work, the life of Bede, the Holy Shroud of Turin, in addition to social and ethical issues - bereavement, divorce and so on.

At Oxford Vision, there is a long-standing relationship with the broadcasting institutions in the person of Chairman Brian Brown, formerly head of the Television Research Unit at Oxford Polytechnic. He is fully conversant with the restraints and possibilities inherent in public service broadcasting, and tailors his aims accordingly: these are *"to inform and educate in an entertaining way"*. Aware of the new obligations imposed on the television companies to buy in 25% of programming material from independent sources, he is confident of being in the forefront because of his close links. He regards the Protestant tradition in this country as being responsible for placing undue emphasis on a word-based message at the expense of the rapidly expanding visual media which are apparently being neglected or even rejected in contrast to the renewed concern for meaning and content in Catholic circles. Poor take-up of video players among church attenders, lack of awareness concerning media potential, and

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an insistence on the essential link between scripture and salvation, are all evidences of this imbalance. His low-key approach is in direct contrast with that adopted by the Televangelists who Brown regards as suffering from working on a false premise of shared assumptions and meanings in line with the 'hypodermic needle' model of communication. In the UK, he feels, broadcasters are looking for biblical material, not faith material.

### *5.3.1.2 The insurgents*

CTV Europe are essentially Trevor and Shirley Martin, a Christian couple wholly committed to their work and, in common with the other organisations in this category, wholly convinced that they are engaged in a battle for the airwaves. This spiritual struggle is described in sustained metaphors focussing mainly on the 'ownership' of the medium, as described in their October/November 1986 Update letter -

*As we press on...we are experincing intense opposition from the Prince of Power of the Air. But together we shall win the battle of the [tv] airwaves BECAUSE JESUS IS THE RIGHTFUL LORD OF THEM ! The Usurper's power will yet be broken, "*

Despite mortgaging their house to pay for a pilot programme, - a magazine show format - the Martins have yet to find a buyer, and have had to content themselves with appearances on 'Beyond Belief' on C4, 'Did You See' on BBC2, and a write-up in "one of the world's most prestigious glossy mags for avante garde young people", 'The Face'. Undaunted, they still intend to carry on with their work of pioneering Christian TV in Britain, and have set up a Trust Fund to pave the way for satellite broadcasting. Dales Television, on the other hand, has retreated from that particular battle arena after suffering heavy losses, and has chosen to concentrate on the home front. Their aims are worth citing in full since they are the most comprehensive set received from any of the organisations contacted, and express both the frustrations and hopes of the Evangelical wing. They are as follows:

- 1) To use the medium of television; Broadcast, satellite, cable, video tape or whatever to distribute programmes that communicate the message of the Kingdom whether that be directly evangelistic or more generally moralistic in content and context,*
- 2) To produce programmes that are informative, interesting and entertaining not only for Christian audiences but also enjoyable and provoking for non-*

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*Christain ones,*

- 3) To use a wide spectrum of formats and types of programming eg, documentary drama, soap, music, comedy, chat etc,*
- 4) To maintain high standards of production enabling the end product to find a wide spectrum of outlets in world markets,*
- 5) To work wherever possible in line with current broadcast standards and practice enabling wide product acceptance,*
- 6) To use the medium of television to show that the Christian life is exciting, dynamic and fun affecting every aspect of our lives, our relationships our homes etc,*
- 7) To work towards establishing some form of regular broadcasting output that will reach a wide viewing audience,*
- 8) To do all above in a more challenging and effective way than the existing religious broadcasters have yet achieved,*

What is interesting here is the lack of understanding embodied in the opening statement which links all the visual media together without distinction, coupled with the sweeping assumption that each is capable of communicating a spiritual message without qualification. It rather seems as if Dales are prepared to use any method in any context to produce any effect, even if they realise that their hands are tied as soon as they attempt to work in conjunction with the broadcasting institutions. It is slightly disappointing to learn that their output to date consists of some five videos only - two documentaries entitled 'They Claim a Miracle', one attempting to restore the rather tarnished image of the Church, one on drug addiction, and a concert featuring Don Francisco (a leading contemporary Christian singer/songwriter). None has been broadcast in the UK so far.

CVG, whose aim is to establish a European Christian television network, are in no doubt as to the seriousness of their mission: growing violence and lawlessness are symptomatic of an even greater evil - the undermining of Christian principles, and the media are central to this insofar as they support or refute the teaching young people receive at home; at present

*Many programmes now popularise rudeness, treachery, lying, cheating and lack of respect, and these soon influence young people to 'try it on' at school and at home. As they grow older, television continues to shape their attitudes and beliefs.'*

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'Taken from a publicity handout - 'The Real Alternative'

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Unless the media are appropriated for the Kingdom, these destructive influences will simply increase, so CVG is committed to providing an alternative - *"an entertainment channel that glorifies God"*.

So far, none of the company's explicitly christian offerings has been taken up by the broadcasters, but one documentary on the Vietnamese boat people was screened in October 1987 by LWT. Their version of the Christian television magazine - 'The Once a Week Show' - has been put out on cable with a view to being networked later on, but at the time of writing this has not yet happened. The remaining organisation, Spirit Free Communications, is different in that it is denominationally based. Operating out of Halton Pentecostal Church, Widnes, under the leadership of co-Pastor Stuart Windsor, they have been making videos since 1983. Now they are equipped to professional standard, although along with the other groups they could be hard-hit by changes in broadcasting standards if digital recordings become the norm, and specialise in taping events. Much of their material is musically orientated and has been accepted by Vision Broadcasting International<sup>1</sup> for distribution on cable TV, but despite an avowed aim to *"provide the full gospel of Jesus Christ on both video and audio"* and to *"use both cable and satellite broadcasting"*, this aspect of the work is slow in taking off.

### *5.3.2 Effectiveness of religious programmes*

None of those contacted in this group made any serious attempt to monitor the impact their contributions made: in the case of the Evangelicals, this could perhaps be related to a somewhat optimistic view of the communicative process in which any message would produce some effect, combined with a structural inability to mount any sort of effective machinery to carry out the task; as for the first group, their philosophy is so closely allied to that of the institutions that it is reasonable to expect a similar attitude towards 'success'.

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<sup>1</sup>VBI is a Swindon based group who concern themselves with placing Christian material on UK cable systems free of charge on Sunday afternoons. This service meets with a mixed response from programme suppliers who, while grateful for the exposure, regard their position as financially awkward if not untenable - hence the tendency of VBI to exploit American source material which is frequently supplied free of charge.

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That this is so was confirmed in the correspondence received from two companies - Vision Productions and CTVC: the former had "*never actually taken the trouble to evaluate the effectiveness of a programme*", but did go on to cite the receiving of a major award and other encouraging feedback as evidences of success; CTVC, on the other hand, use two yardsticks - whether a programme is bought for broadcasting, and if so, how large the audience is.

The problem for the Evangelical group is that so far none of their programmes has been broadcast and, in addition, there is no way of knowing how many subscribers watch their contributions on cable. For those who also operate a video hire service, figures are (presumably) available which would indicate popularity of individual tapes, but this would be of little value in assessing whether a particular message had been communicated or not. This may not be of vital importance when dealing with entertaining or teaching material, but a significant number of videos are promoted on the strength of their evangelistic appeal, and it is somewhat surprising to find that more is not being done to examine whether these are producing an effect. If the intention of these organisations is to appropriate the broadcast media for the specific purpose of extending the Kingdom, it would seem prudent to at least engage in some sort of elementary market research.

As far as CTV are concerned, mere appearances on television in themselves carry important consequences: their Autumn 1987 'News Report' contains the following verdict on the invitation to appear in 'Beyond Belief' on Channel 4;

- 1) It made known for the first time on British television the fact that there was such a thing as distinctively Christian television programmes being made. Several million viewers are aware of this now.*
- 2) It also gave exposure to clips from the pilot and enabled Trevor and Shirley to bear witness in the interview to God's saving love for all men and his power to heal...*

This rather simplistic view that 'exposure equals effect' is echoed in CGV's December 1987 News: speaking of the possibility that their magazine show might be bought by a television company, they write - "*there is obvious merit in being on one of the main channels that everyone in that region could tune to if they wished*". One of the most important issues



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facing the producers of Christian material for the broadcast market is whether it is more effective to work within the confines of the institutional structures or to work towards the setting up of a specifically religious channel, and it is interesting to note the inconsistency here of CVG who are committed to the latter and yet regard exposure on the former as desirable. I shall return to this issue in the final chapter.

### **5.4 The Churches & other Christian Groups**

In general, there is a marked lack of cohesion in the policies and attitudes of the denominational and inter-denominational organisations towards religious broadcasting, with certain notable exceptions. The World Association for Christian Communication (WACC), for instance, is able to capitalise on its global links to debate issues with an unusual depth of awareness, in strong contrast to its Scottish relative - Feed the Minds - whose newly formed communications committee have yet to agree on a set of aims. For the purposes of the present exercise, interviews were held with representatives of three mainline churches - Anglican, Catholic and Methodist - and letters were received from a further six; in addition, six Christian organisations involved in a monitorial or advisory capacity supplied details of their activities. Since none of those contacted actually produced any programme material (except for internal use), the questions asked in discussion were slightly different to those used above, but in order to maintain consistency, the same headings are used.

#### **5.4.1 Aims**

John Barton summed up the work of the Church of England's Broadcasting Department as being fourfold - to liaise with the broadcasters, to service the coverage of major events, to train people in media techniques, and to monitor recent developments in electronic communications. These functions are shared to a certain extent by the other mainstream denominations, although supremacy is accorded to the Anglican church by virtue of its

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Established status, and the Catholic Media office in particular is closely aligned to it. As denominations, they are party to a sometimes uneasy relationship with the production staff - at this level they are consulted only on points of detail rather than programme policy. At the same time, it is the representatives of those same denominations who, in their capacity as members of CRAC, play a major role in the formulation and administration of that policy. The tensions are apparent in the feelings of Sister McHard of the Catholic Media office when she points up the tendency amongst broadcasters to regard religion increasingly as a minority interest. Not only did it receive a disproportionately small slice of the cake compared to (say) sport, but the audiences for such programmes as 'Songs of Praise' and 'Highway' indicate a far from minority appeal of the subject.

Rather than produce material of their own, which for most organisations in this category would be a financial impossibility given current funding practises, most concentrate on making available video tapes on a hire basis and the provision of training facilities. These latter range from a fairly simple studio, as is the case with the Church of Ireland, Presbyterian Church in Ireland (PCI) and Anglican church, to the professionally equipped training centre at Hatch End which offers a ten week production course at £3000 (plus VAT). Most of the videos for hire are educational in the sense that they offer Biblical exposition, discussion starters on ethical issues, documentaries and so on, there being an almost complete absence of what might be termed 'Entertainment' - a striking contrast to the Evangelical approach and to that of the independant distributors who are evaluated below. There seems to be a certain reticence pervading the whole question of videos, possibly due to the unsavoury associations with violence and pornography, and a mild surprise among the smaller denominations that demand for a Christian form should be showing itself.

Outwith the denominations there is a collection of organisations, linked directly or indirectly to them, which either act as monitors of the media (so the National Viewers and Listeners Association - NVLA, and the Christian Broadcasting Council of GB - CBC), or which work in an overlapping sphere (for example WACC, Feed the Minds). In addition, groups such as the Mothers' Union and Evangelical Alliance periodically make

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statements on media issues, the former being committed to a Media Awareness training scheme (MAP) aimed at heightening people's sensitivity towards the agenda-setting process. In general, these groups are critical of the broadcasting institutions, and by virtue of their distance from them (and from the denominations) are able to be rather freer in their criticisms than their mainstream counterparts. Their main line of attack is directed towards moral decay which they attribute to the media, necessitating a re-appropriation of the airwaves by Christians, and thus are similar to the Evangelical groups in category one (see s5.3.1 above).

The Christian Broadcasting Council originated in 1983 when John Q. Davies, conscious that TV in particular was responsible for aiding and abetting the destruction of society, and that successive governments had ignored the problem, determined to start a campaign to "*remind those in authority in parliament, in the media and in government of their responsibility to God and to Society, based on our Christian heritage*"<sup>1</sup> His primary aim was to establish a 'family viewing channel', and to that end he set up a private company which would:

*undertake the provision of broadcasting stations, staff and equipment as and when licenses are made available,,, [as well as],,, acting as an exchange for Christian programming from different countries throughout the world<sup>2</sup>*

Such programming was not to be limited to the broadcast network, however; he also envisaged utilising cable and satellite, calculating that around £1 million to £2 million p.a. would be needed to fund the latter. More recently, there has been a considerable shift in emphasis away from direct interventionist policies to the more spiritual activities of concerted prayer and conference organising. It is still recognised that "*the means of communication are not necessarily on the side of the saints*"<sup>3</sup>, and therefore there is still the need to "*take the airwaves for the Gospel*", but the means to that end are rather more subdued.

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<sup>1</sup>Taken from the original publicity leaflet entitled 'Christian Broadcasting Campaign'. The name was subsequently changed to that used above, but the aims appear to be the same.

<sup>2</sup>ibid., above (note 1)

<sup>3</sup>Taken from a later leaflet (undated) entitled 'Holding Fast to the vision for a Nation'

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NVLA would most certainly echo the sentiments of John Davies, but prefer to vocalise their objections somewhat differently: the keyword here is 'monitoring' - violence, pornography, bad language, etc. are all candidates for the censor and warrant a letter or phone call to someone in authority. Taking the 1956 Television Act as their departure point, they cite the obligations imposed on the broadcasters as being to ensure that programmes:

- as far as possible do not;*
- 1) Offend against good taste and decency;*
- 2) Offend against public feeling;*
- 3) Incite to crime and disorder;*
- 4) Take sides on matters of public interest,"<sup>1</sup>*

As with the CBC, the underlying assumption is that television plays a central role in undermining what amounts to a fundamentally Christian moral and social heritage, and the only way to combat this is for those concerned about deteriorating standards to take action and show the strength of feeling of the 'moral majority'. Religious programmes do not come in for much criticism, presumably because they are among the few programme types that generally espouse a traditional ethic.

Also concerned about standards is the Evangelical Alliance who, in response to the Government's Green Paper on the Future of Broadcasting issued a statement<sup>2</sup> which expressed views equally applicable to the visual media. They are of the opinion that the technology behind radio is a gift from God so as a medium it should be instrumental in enhancing the quality of life, that treating viewers as consumers amounts to "*demeaning reductionism*" (ibid., p2); that human nature being what it is, some sort of constraints are necessary in order to promote excellence over the mediocre and banal; that community life is central to mankind and involves a distinctive spiritual dimension; and that religious exploitation of the "*vulnerable and impressionable*" (ibid., p3) - *as occurs in the worst aspects of the 'electronic church' - must be avoided.*

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<sup>1</sup>Taken from '*Monitoring Radio and Television: Guidance Notes*', issued by NVLA (undated)

<sup>2</sup>'A Joint Response to the Green Paper '*Radio: Choices and Opportunities*' From the Evangelical Alliance and the British Evangelical Council' (26th June 1987)

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The Green Paper (they felt) failed to address such issues as equal access to the media for the disadvantaged and marginalised, better representation of religious minorities - including the more than one million evangelicals in the UK and, in addition, inherently favoured the promotion of anti-family or sexist views at the expense of a religious alternative (p.4). On the other hand, they cautiously welcomed the proposal to enable religious groups to sponsor programmes, provided that a comprehensive vetting procedure was established.

At the Mothers' Union, there is a commitment to increasing media awareness among its members born out of a desire to open people's eyes to the largely hidden agenda-setting which goes on behind the scenes, and this covers all the media - TV, radio, advertisements, newspapers, video, computer games etc. The aim is to encourage greater selectivity and hence a more balanced use of leisure time, part of the exercise being to produce biennial reports based on viewers' analyses which are then collated and forwarded to the BBC and IBA. The MU itself is not in a position to produce its own video material, but is concerned with the placement of Christian material insofar as it affects the image people receive of the Church at large, a concern shared by Feed the Minds in Scotland.

This umbrella organisation is sponsoring its own brand of television awareness training, based more directly on the American prototype, as well as attempting to initiate discussions amongst the Scottish churches on the question of possible impact that satellite and cable might make. To date no specific aims have emerged, a somewhat discouraging comment on the level of concern in the denominations, but the structure has at least been provided.

WACC, on the other hand, the worldwide body which attempts to link all such disparate groups together, has an established forum for discussing such issues, the only drawback from a parochial point of view being that there is an understandable tendency to focus on Third World issues at the expense of relatively local ones such as the future of religious broadcasting in the UK. Their 'Christian principles of communication' (adopted by the Central Committee in May 1986) make salutary reading, stressing as they do the participatory and prophetic aspects of communication, as does the record of the keynote address given by General

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Secretary Carlos Valle at the following year's meeting (published in Communication Resource no. 10, July 1987), which examines the relationship between communication and power. Although religious broadcasting is, and should be, a valid form of communication, too often it works against liberation rather than increasing the possibility of it occurring, and must therefore be regarded with suspicion. The implications of this for the present study have been touched on in the opening chapter, and will be considered in more depth below [chapter 8].

### **5.4.2 Effectiveness**

Generally speaking, the attitude of the organisations in this category towards religious broadcasting tended to vary in accordance with their proximity to the institutions responsible for it. The denominations, for example, were reasonably content with the concept, if somewhat dissatisfied with the content, in contrast to the other groups whose reaction ranged from passive acceptance to fairly aggressive intolerance. John Barton, for instance, speaking of the relationship between his department and the media said:

*By and large we have an excellent relationship with radio and television personnel and although we know that we have no editorial control over their output and are sometimes frustrated by the quality of programming, the overall result is not bad.'*

This view was confirmed during an interview when he (light-heartedly) suggested a score of 6/10 for effectiveness, possibly higher in the case of worship programmes, and distinctly lower when it came to portraying the church to non-churchgoers. There is a tendency to include the controversial and out-of-the-ordinary at the expense of more mundane matters, and this was not felt to be truly representative. A certain amount of feedback was received by the department, but it tended to come from viewers who felt that their point of view was not adequately presented; in general, there appeared to be a distinct lack of understanding as to how the broadcasting system worked at the parish level.

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'Letter to author dated 14th December 1987

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When asked whether he thought TV could communicate effectively, Barton replied "very superficially", and went on to express the view that the possibilities for audience participation were much greater in a medium like radio - where the listener could effectively become a co-producer, whereas TV "does it all". The best method for communicating the Gospel must still be person-to-person. On the question of 'challenge', he cited the example of Bob Geldof being awakened from his complacency over the issue of Ethiopia by watching the BBC news, using this as evidence of an ability to alert people to experiences they were previously unaware of<sup>1</sup>, but on a specifically Christian level, he was not aware of anyone who had been personally challenged by a religious programme.

Sr McHard of the Catholic Media office criticised the religious broadcasters for failing to inform and educate properly, and for habitually undermining traditional beliefs. She would prefer to see a more positive image of 'caring people' promoted, rather than the contentious theology of programmes such as 'Jesus the Evidence'<sup>2</sup>. She also felt that people on the fringe of the church were served rather badly by the 'intellectual' way in which religious matters were presented, giving the impression that they formed part of a cerebral pursuit rather than being central to life. Religious programmes, in her opinion, offered little in the way of challenge: some programmes did by virtue of their content and visual production, but this was offset by the need for the viewer to share in a common language which for the most part they simply did not do. Radio, however, could exert an influence, and she gave two examples of people changing direction as a result of listening to radio broadcasts, a point which is paralleled when the contribution of video is considered below (s5.5).

David Bridge (Methodist) felt that broadcasters hoped to reach as wide an audience as possible, by pitching programmes at all levels from light entertainment to the cerebral, but he was not aware of anyone who had been changed as a result of watching one - although he had heard of a film crew being affected by a minister's testimony.

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<sup>1</sup>It is interesting to compare this with the theoretical position outlined in Horsfield (1984), p132. See also s6.6.4 below.

<sup>2</sup>See Wallis (1987), ch. 7, for full discussion of the controversy generated by this series

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The difficulty with trying to assess effectiveness was compounded by the fact that television was not a two-way medium, despite the sometimes large response in terms of mail to a particular programme or series: Gerald Priestland generated some 20,000 letters, but this in itself does not constitute proof of effective communication. An experiment in feedback had been carried out by Granada under the heading 'Aircare'<sup>1</sup>, which proved very successful as far as the organisers were concerned, and in Scotland a Christian Enquiry Agency had been founded, but neither project has been running long enough to enable any firm conclusions to be drawn.

Speaking on behalf of the Church of Ireland, Kenneth Milne (Honorary Secretary to Central Communications Board Broadcasting Committee) felt that *"television has yet to discover the appropriate mode for conveying religious ideas and religious experience"*<sup>2</sup>. He acknowledged the value of services to the housebound and elderly, and appreciated the televising of major ecclesiastical events, but regarded the expression of worship generally in that medium as less than satisfactory - at present, he wrote, *"we are just feeling our way"*. As for the other denominations, the only evaluation that took place tended to be of any video material they might possess, and then it was a question of how often a tape had been loaned out rather than any attempt to put a value on its communicative content in an objective way.

At the Mothers' Union, Monica Harris (Organising Secretary to the Media Department) spoke of a personal feeling that television must be able to communicate, if only because visual images are the ones people react to in the first instance: a stranger entering a church would be more impressed by what they saw than what they heard, at least initially. She had no personal knowledge of anyone being directly challenged by a religious programme, but did believe that many had been helped - often in conjunction with a degree of personal involvement by someone close by. It is doubtful whether such a positive view would be entirely shared by the CBC or NVLA, both organisations stressing the destructive nature of television, and the former espousing the idea of a separate channel;

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<sup>1</sup>See *'Aircare: A Feasibility Study in Television Ministry'*, by Peter Heinze (WACC, 1982)

<sup>2</sup>Letter to author, dated 7th December 1987



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neither is it clear whether the Evangelical Alliance is entirely satisfied with arrangements as they stand - certainly they express the hope that a more enlightened attitude towards the Evangelical position might be adopted in the future as the following extract from their statement shows:

*For centuries evangelical Christians have been involved in communication, We are committed to proclaiming the Good News about Jesus Christ as contained in the historic creeds of the Church,, It is our hope that future arrangements for broadcasting in the UK will enable this role to continue and even to be enhanced,* (op cit,, p4)

On the other hand, Dr. Hans Florin (formerly of WACC, now Regional Secretary to the United Bible Societies) is of the opinion that British religious broadcasting is the best in the world. In a letter dated 5th February 1988 to the author, he expressed the view that: "*the religious programmes of the BBC and IBA companies are by and large the best, most balanced public religious programmes*", the only drawback being that this had lulled the churches into a sense of false security so that a "*different theological profile*" would be very difficult to envisage now. To a certain extent, this was the fault of the churches themselves for not taking full advantage of the consultative machinery embodied in CRAC, but he did acknowledge that on occasion, network personnel did prove "*hard of hearing*", both at production and at managerial level. Perhaps the biggest obstacle to change, in his view, was the lack of unity among the churches compounded by an even greater lack of funding. In these conditions, the only way in which a sustained challenge could be mounted - and here he felt that the fringe faith communities were more likely to become involved than the denominational churches - would be in association with the 'Electronic Church', and this amounted to treason [see below, Postscript].

## **5.5 The Video Scene**

### **5.5.1 Aims**

Twelve organisations responded to the request for information in a way that permitted analysis, five of them being concerned primarily with educational or informational objectives, and seven engaged in what (they

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regarded as) a predominantly evangelistic enterprise. Interestingly enough, those in the first category were all institutionalised to the extent that they had a defined structure and were highly integrated into their social world, while those in the second tended to represent the outworkings of an individual's vision or ministry, only one (Kenneth Copeland Ministries) having the benefit of a large-scale organisation to back it up. Production of material was not a major concern for these people, videos being seen as a tool or means to an end rather than an end in themselves.

Audio Visual Ministries (AVM) of Northern Ireland has been established for some 25 years, and use both sound and video tapes for teaching in what is now called an 'Open Bible College'. They have close links with the Irish House church movement as well as the Ichthus fellowship in London who themselves provide some of the tapes. Their catalogue does contain material of an evangelistic nature - testimonies, Gospel messages and so on, but the main thrust is undoubtedly towards the equipping of potential and existing leaders without them having to leave their local situation, the bulk of the 600 titles being devoted to this end.

London Bible College are similarly involved in theological training, but their's is a more conventional approach involving as it does the provision of structured courses 'in house' leading to an academic qualification. Here, video is a relatively recent departure, and in the six years the department has been operating some 30 titles have been produced "*so that the expertise of our Faculty could be made available to the general Christian public*" (letter to author dated 18/12/1987). The hope is that these tapes may be used in small groups for Bible-study or discussion purposes, and to that end accompanying notes are supplied, but plans for integrating them into a correspondence course have not yet materialised. From a qualitative point of view, these productions are admittedly crude, the feeling being that such a simple format is acceptable in an environment of that nature.

Scripture Union, who work closely with schools, have their own Sound and Vision Unit which has been producing videos since 1983, and their philosophy is very different to that espoused by Dr Webb at LBC: John Anscombe, writing in a publicity leaflet entitled '*WORD In Your Eye*' (undated) has this to say about production standards:

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*British television and radio are probably the best in the world and certainly condition their audiences to expect all audio-visual material to be of at least a similar standard. The judgement; 'pretty good for a Christian outfit' won't do, and cuts no ice with the sophisticated young people who form the major part of our audience.*

Nevertheless, the intention to use videos as a tool is the same, and the principle of issuing notes to assist the teacher is once again adopted. Anscombe is aware that Christians display a tendency to be "very wordy in our communication of the Word", and this has stimulated a desire within the SU unit to see visual material used far more to achieve an "imaginative combination of sound and vision", the aim always being to "communicate the Word of God more effectively".

The evangelistic zeal of the second group of respondents is conveyed in the phrases used to describe their aims. Examples of these are :-

- *"That finally every knee shall bow, that Jesus is Lord and King"*<sup>1</sup>
- *"to spread the good news of Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour through audio visual means"*<sup>2</sup>
- *"to help spread the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ using television and video"*<sup>3</sup>
- *"to enable every believer to overcome sickness, poverty and defeat in their lives, and therefore through a radiant, over-coming Christian testimony, to be more effective witnesses to reach the lost for our Lord Jesus Christ,"*<sup>4</sup>
- *[to encourage] "more and more people to look closely at the claims of Jesus Christ and respond to the gospel"*<sup>5</sup>

The centrality of need for a personal faith in Jesus is here combined with an almost naive faith in the ability of audio-visual means to assist in achieving that end, vindicated I should add, in the experiences of more than one of the organisations.

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<sup>1</sup>Christian Technical Resources Centre (CTRC)

<sup>2</sup>Christian Video Ventures (CVV)

<sup>3</sup>Joy Today Christian Communications

<sup>4</sup>Kenneth Copeland Ministries

<sup>5</sup>Mobile Christian Ministries (MCM)

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CVV, Joy Today and Kenneth Copeland each have (or have had) aspirations in the direction of television - the latter promising that the situation whereby Britain is the only developed country in the world where direct broadcasting of the Gospel is not allowed will shortly be changed - but more usually the videos are seen in small group or domestic contexts. Teaching is regarded as an important but secondary feature of their 'ministry', the format being less structured and more entertaining than their educational counterparts, with a strong emphasis on family viewing.

### *5.5.2 Effectiveness*

The only organisation not making an attempt at evaluation, or not providing details if they do, was Trinity Video. Trinity operates more along the lines of a video-hire agency than anything else and presumably could at least monitor the level of borrowing, but in itself this would hardly constitute a measure of efficiency. As for the rest, they rely mainly on word-of-mouth or periodic user-surveys: SU adopt the latter approach which is more in keeping with their organisational structure, while AVM, LBC, CVV and Longview Training & Video Services rely on viewer feedback, and three further groups - CTRC, Joy Today and MCM - engage in more personal evaluation. They talk with, and pray with, their 'clients', as do the Kenneth Copeland Video Ministers, on occasion witnessing remarkable events: Beryl Plumpton of MCM cited in a letter the following examples: *"whilst a Boys Brigade in London were watching, nine boys were converted. Whilst a woman was watching a teaching video she was healed of cancer"*; and Kim Freeborn (UK Director of Operations, Kenneth Copeland Ministries) claimed in a letter dated 14th December 1987 that:

*We have seen many miracles of healing and hundreds of folk have been set free from life-time problems, and many have been born again; indeed, in one case, a husband and wife who were born again at a video meeting are now serving the Lord full-time as pastors in their own local church,*

These recollections stand in direct contrast to those of the respondents in the first two categories dealt with above, (broadcasters and churches), where no such effect was alluded to, and suggests that video *per se* may well function in a different way to television. Clearly, such a notion

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would require substantiation of the claimed miracles, an examination of the context within which they are said to have occurred, and a wider theoretical understanding than is possible here, but nevertheless the point is worth bearing in mind.

### **5.6 C a b l e & S a t e l l i t e**

At present there are some twelve cable companies operating in the UK, with a further eleven in receipt of a franchise but not yet transmitting. According to the Annual Report of the Cable Authority for 1986/7, these served amost 200,000 households (as at April 1987) of which the majority were in socio-economic groups 'C2' or 'D', contained more than 3.56 people, possessed a video-recorder and more than one TV, and spent over 5 hours per day watching television - only 28% of which time was on cable as opposed to broadcast programmes. Satellite provided material for seven channels, supplying between them more than 75 hours per day of entertainment and sport. The whole operation is overseen by the Authority which was instituted on December 1st 1984 under the provisions of the Broadcasting Act of that year, its main tasks being to grant franchises and monitor programme provision. In contrast to the broadcasting networks, restrictions on the content of programming are relatively light, not least in the area of religion: only political sponsorship and the advertising of tobacco products are ruled out of court automatically - all other 'contentious' material is merely subject to scrutiny at the Authority's discretion. This was hailed as good news by those religious groups looking for a new outlet for their message, but in the event only Swindon, Ealing and Croydon chose to regularly carry any such programmes.

Tony Currie, Controller of Programmes since 1987, afforded the view that previous to the enabling Act, religion on TV was "*shackled*", whereas on cable, provided that no undue prominence was given to any particular religion over the service as a whole, groups were free to express their own opinions without the need for a convoluted balancing act. The implications of this were that firstly, it was possible for (say) a Catholic channel to be instigated so long as a Protestant one offered a contrasting view; and secondly, religious advertising is permitted. This latter is

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controlled by a Code of Practice which prohibits the making of financial appeals, but nevertheless offers a significantly greater degree of flexibility than is currently the case with broadcast television, itself under review.

American organisations were quick to seize the opportunity afforded them, among them the Worldwide Church of God (producers of Plain Truth magazine) who submitted their offering entitled 'The World Tomorrow' for scrutiny. In its original form, this was deemed unsuitable for a British audience, but after modification it was permitted and is presently put out on Skychannel at midnight on Saturdays, offering an interpretation of topical news items against a background of biblical prophecy. From a production point of view, the programme is of a very high standard - especially when compared to certain Evangelical material emanating from the States, the format being a stereotypical one of imposing figure sitting behind equally imposing desk with footage of news clips in between expositional monologues. Whether the content is 'correct' is of little importance as far as the Cable Authority are concerned, so long as it is presented in an acceptable way and does not offend.

Other religious interests were represented by Jimmy Swaggart, previously on New World channel, who expressed a desire to move into cable, and the Family Channel which was run by VBI (see above, s5.3.1.2). Currie felt that Swaggart could well be acceptable in some situations, although certain aspects of his ministry would not be permitted: touching the screen, for instance, was regarded as a health risk on account of radiation levels, and fund-raising was prohibited in any case. As to the Family Channel, currently this provided approximately four hours on a Sunday afternoon and was carried by Swindon, Ealing and Croydon. Material came from a variety of sources, some extremely low budget or even home-made, the funding coming from the private sector. While the file marked 'religious' was the thickest in Currie's possession, only these were live options at present.

Since there is no objection to evangelism in principle on cable, it is slightly surprising that more Christian groups are not attempting to use the medium: Currie felt that this could be due to a lack of production capability, most enquiries he received being in connection with the setting up of a channel (ownership of which is prohibited under the Act), rather

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than the provision of material.

Of the 51 cable and satellite companies contacted, only two of the seventeen who replied had any sort of contact with religious programming, and three wrote to the effect that they had no intention of carrying such material. CableVision of Dunstable expressed a concern that American programmes would be of dubious quality, and felt that some sort of guidelines from the churches would be an asset in making editorial decisions; Clyde CableVision of Glasgow preferred a "*more balanced reflection of religious interests*" than was available in some Evangelical productions; Swindon Cable looked to VBI as a recognised Programme Provider to maintain standards; and Turner Broadcasting, parent company to CNN news network, replied that on the strength of their American experience, religious broadcasting largely relates to its own specific audience, and generates only a small amount of negative feedback.

As far as the satellite companies are concerned, religion appears to be a non-starter, with the possible exception of Children's Channel who screen 'According to Kossoff' - "*a master storyteller, in his own study telling some of the best known stories from the Old Testament*". At present, the only other Christian programming on satellite emanates from Norway on the New Life channel, and there is no way of knowing who (if anyone) watches it.

## Part Two

# EMPIRICAL FINDINGS



# Chapter Six

## THE AUDIENCE



## **6.1 Introduction**

Over the first eight months of 1988, three audience surveys were carried out as part of the empirical content of this study: the results are presented here in the order of their compilation.

Between 21st February and 27th March 1988 an audience survey was carried out in the town of Haddington, East Lothian, as part of the ongoing research programme. During that period, 183 questionnaire forms were distributed by 29 volunteers from two churches - St. Mary's and Haddington West, the resultant data forming the basis of this analysis. What follows is an overview of relevant methodological considerations, a breakdown of how each question was answered, an attempt to isolate significant factors, and some reactions as to overall implications.

## **6.2 Methodology**

The survey was based on a questionnaire (see Appendix IV) designed specifically for this project by the author in close cooperation with Dr Alec Robertson of the Dept. of Social Policy and Social Work, University of Edinburgh. The intention was to produce an interview-based document which would catalogue data under 3 main headings - socio-economic/demographic, religious, and viewing characteristics, although in the event it was used on occasion in a self-completion context.

No attempt was made to produce a representative sample; rather, the sample profile was compared to that of the community as a whole once the survey was complete, and any differences noted. Data for this exercise was extracted from the 1981 Census. Similarly, no attempt has been made to adjust the data in any way.

Due to the method adopted for data collection, the sample inevitably shows a bias towards church members, but overall it was felt that this was justified as an acceptable limitation. Each variable was coded separately and treated for the purposes of statistical analysis as a potentially significant factor; the exceptions to this were two variables which were produced by adding together a series of different levels of response - Commitment and Fragility.

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**Commitment:-** Where a respondent proved to be a regular (weekly) church-attender, prayed daily, and answered 'Strongly Agree' to the first two statements in Question 14, he/she was recoded as displaying a high level of commitment.

Conversely, if someone was not a church member, never attended services, never prayed, and did not regard themselves as a Christian OR answered 'Strongly Agree' to statements 3 and 4 in Question 14, he/she was regarded as displaying a low level of commitment (or high non-faith).

Thus, commitment in this context is to be understood in terms of behavioural as well as attitudinal characteristics.

**Fragility:-** For those above the age of 60, other than married, and retired or unemployed, a high level of fragility was attributed.

For those younger than 60, married or single, having some sort of full/part time occupation, and if working, doing so in a profession or service industry, a low level of fragility was accorded - alternatively described as a high level of self-sufficiency. [For a fuller discussion, see s6.4.3.2].

Socio-economic groups were broadly based on those used in the Census, but collapsed into broader categories to make coding simpler; the resultant bands have been labelled 'Managerial & Professional' (1), 'Service' (2), 'Manual' (3), 'Self-Employed' (4), 'Agricultural' (5), 'Armed Forces' (6) and 'Inadequately Described' (7).

Where a form was not completed 100% in accordance with instructions, wherever possible all relevant data has been taken into account and missing answers left out of statistical calculations.

The analyses have been carried out using the Frequencies and Crosstabs routines from SPSS-X (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

Relationships between variables have been taken to be significant at the 95% level of probability throughout.

Correlations (ie strength of significant relationships) have been identified at four levels -

0.0 - 0.39	Weak but noteworthy
0.4 - 0.69	Moderate
0.7 - 0.89	Fairly Strong
0.9 - 1.00	Very Strong

### 6.3 Results: Haddington

#### 6.3.1 Socio-Economic characteristics (Q2 to Q7)

Q2. AGE

Table 1  
Age: Sample & Census Compared

	Sample	Census	Difference
16-24	12.3%	17.5%	-5.2%
25-34	14.6%	18.7%	-4.1%
35-44	23.4%	16.7%	+6.7%
45-59	25.2%	22.5%	+2.7%
60+	24.6%	24.8%	-0.2%

The largest discrepancy was in the age band 35-44, and only one group (60+) was at all representative of the population as a whole. In general terms, the sample displays a positive bias so that the top end of the age spectrum is over-represented.

Differences are even more striking when broken down by sex as the following diagrams show

Fig. 1  
Age by Sex: Sample

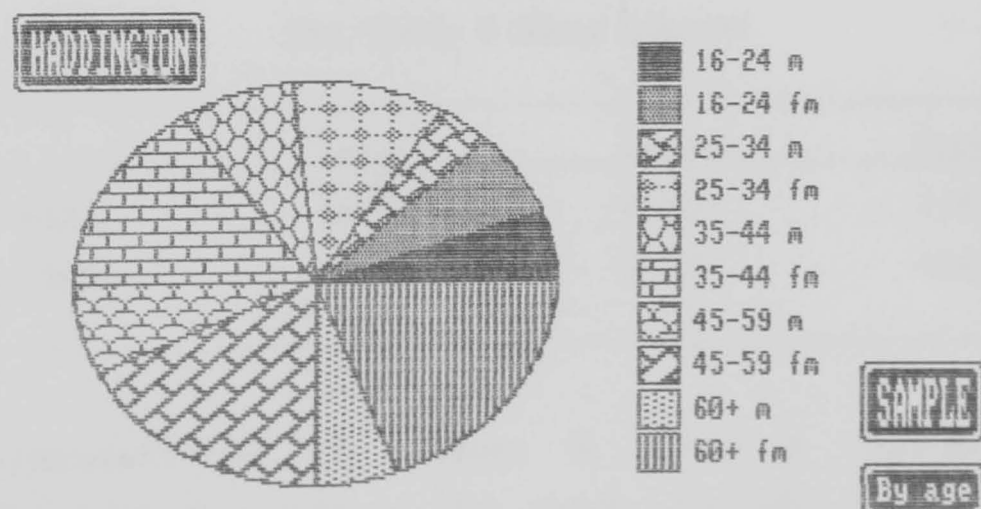
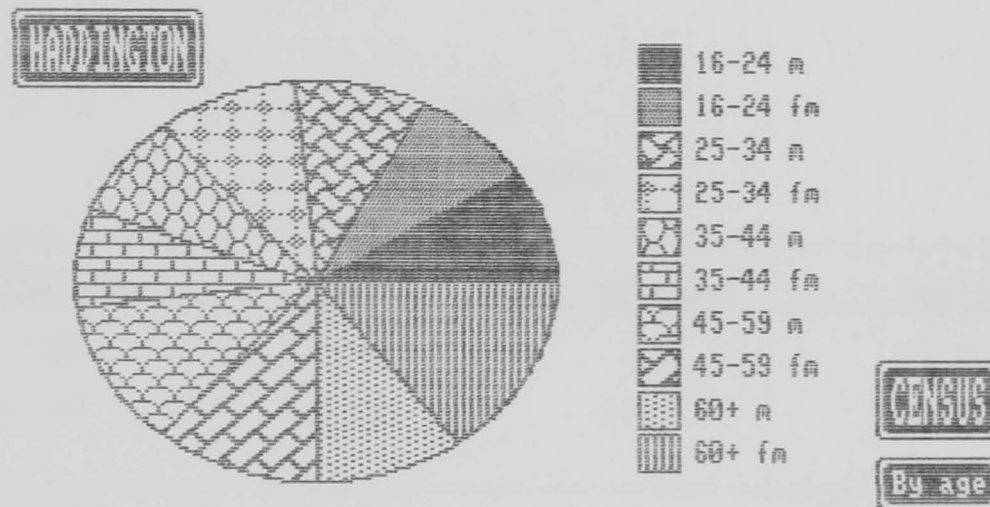


Fig. 2

Age by Sex; Census



Categories over-represented in the sample are predominantly female (except 16-24), the discrepancies being greatest in age bands 35-44 and 45-59, with males consistently under-represented - most noticeably in age band 25-34.

### Q3. SEX

Table 2

Sex; Sample & Census Compared

	Sample	Census	Difference
Male	29.7%	48.5%	-18.8%
Female	70.3%	51.5%	+18.8%

The over-representation of females is partly a function of church membership, itself dominated by that gender, but also may be attributable to their greater perceived receptivity on the part of the interviewers.

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Whatever the reason, the imbalance cannot be ignored although as with other biases, it does not affect the identification of statistically significant relationships.

### Q4. STATUS

Table 3  
Marital Status

	Married	Single	Widowed	Sep'd/Divorced
Male	70.9%	25.5%	1.8%	1.8%
Female	61.4%	22.1%	14.2%	2.4%

The most striking feature here is the relatively large number of widowed women compared to their male counterparts, due presumably to a greater life-expectancy. This has implications for the composition of the 'fragile' sub-group mentioned above.

When compared to the Census returns, in which Single, Widowed, Separated & Divorced are grouped together, the following pattern emerges -

Table 4  
Marital Status; Sample & Census Compared

		Sample	Census	Difference
Male	Married	70.9%	68.9%	+2.0%
	S/W/D	29.1%	31.1%	-2.0%
Female	Married	61.4%	64.9%	-3.5%
	S/W/D	38.6%	35.1%	+3.5%

In this respect at least, the sample does generally follow the population as a whole.

### Q5. Have you ever been to college/university

Asked whether they had ever been to college/university, 50.8% of respondents answered in the affirmative and 49.2% in the negative. Gender

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had no statistical significance in determining this outcome, but age did insofar as those older than 60 were much less likely to have been educated beyond school level, and those in the 25-34 band much more likely to. An interesting comparison here is offered by the Lifestyle Survey (Church of Scotland, 1987) in which only 29.8% of Church of Scotland members admitted to having been to college compared to 46.6% non-members (Table 2.5). This would suggest either that Haddington is home to a highly educated church or, more likely, that the sample is biased in favour of the professional middle-classes, a suggestion borne out by the findings of the next two questions.

Q6. Are you -

Table 5  
Employment

	Wkng F/T	Wkng P/T	Stdnt	Hsewife	Ret'd	Unempld
Male	70.9%	1.8%	9.1%	0.0%	14.5%	3.6%
Female	34.1%	24.6%	3.2%	15.1%	22.2%	1.8%

Comparable figures for the Census are not available for every category, but the following table gives some indication as regards the major groupings:

Table 6  
Employment: Sample & Census Compared

	Working	Student	Retired
Male	73.6% (72.7%)	4.4% (9.1%)	12.2% (14.5%)
Female	44.3% (58.7%)	4.1% (3.2%)	4.7% (22.2%)

(Figures in brackets derived from survey sample)

The male sample is reasonably representative of Haddington as a whole in terms of employment, but the female figures show a considerable over-representation both in terms of those working and those retired, presumably at the expense of those describing themselves as 'housewife'.

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The significance of this will be seen more clearly when the figures are set against the results of Q7.

### Q7 What is your job?

As indicated in the opening remarks, Socio-Economic Groups (SEGs) have been redefined in order to simplify the process of coding and analysis, the assumption being that this will not materially affect their role as possible factors. Such a step is vindicated in part at least by the discovery that SEG (as redefined) appears only five times as a significant variable - in determining the response to Q13 [How often do you pray?], Q18 [not interested], Q22 [information], Q23 [closely] and Q27 [more controversial].

Direct comparison with the Census is made somewhat difficult by the fact that in that source, details of SEG are only available in the 10% format, so these have had to be rounded up, and secondly, a different base is used - ie it is recorded as a proportion of those economically active and retired, rather than the total sample. The table below therefore must be interpreted with caution.

Table 7  
SEG: Sample & Census Compared

	SAMPLE		CENSUS	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
SEG 1	19.0%	35.4%	12.0%	3.1%
2	5.2%	20.7%	11.6%	23.9%
3	3.5%	6.0%	27.4%	5.4%
4	6.0%	2.6%	3.0%	0.5%
5	1.7%	0.0%	6.2%	0.4%
6	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	0.0%
7	0.0%	0.0%	3.1%	2.6%

Amongst the men, there is an almost entire absence of manual workers [SEG 3], partly compensated by a large contingent of Managerial and Professional



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personnel [SEG 1], and it is this latter group which shows an even greater imbalance when the female contingent is examined. As with the Lifestyle Survey, "we may conclude that the survey-sample is somewhat biased towards the middle-class occupations...and away from the semi- and unskilled working classes." (ibid., p12).

### **6.3.2 Religious characteristics (Q8 to Q14)**

#### **Q8 What is your religion?**

As might be expected with a church-based survey, the vast majority of those interviewed (more than 98%) declared their religion to be 'Christian', the dissenters describing themselves as 'Agnostic'. (It is interesting to compare these figures with the results of Q12 in particular, where the interviewee was asked more directly whether he/she regarded him/herself as a Christian). Such a high proportion may be due to a variety of factors - perceiving oneself as living in a 'Christian country', not wishing to offend the interviewer, belief that some religion is better than none etc. What is not possible is to examine how adherents to other faiths differ in their attitudes and behavioural responses to religious broadcasting, if at all, and a separate study would be necessary to produce any firm evidence in this area.

#### **Q9 Are you a member of a church?**

82% of the sample claimed to be church members. Significant factors in determining membership include Age (those over 60 are more likely to be members, those under 24 significantly less), Education (college educated respondents are more likely NOT to be members) and Employment (those working full-time and students are significantly under-represented in membership, part-timers, housewives and retired over-represented). All these correlations are statistically weak (ie less than 0.39), but nevertheless noteworthy.

Whilst membership by itself could be taken as a significant factor in determining behavioural responses such as frequency of prayer, church

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attendance, viewing of religious programmes and so on, it was decided to attempt to develop an even stronger measure, and the results of this are discussed below [see section on Commitment - 6.3.2.1].

### **Q10 How often do you go to services?**

The following table compares the findings of this study with the Lifestyle Survey broken down by Church of Scotland member and non-church:-

Table 8  
Church Attendance

	SAMPLE		LIFESTYLE SURVEY	
	C of S	Non	C of S	Non
Weekly	40.7%	9.7%	45.2%	13.4%
Monthly	29.0%	3.2%	19.2%	6.5%
Less	17.2%	19.4%	25.0%	26.3%
Special	11.7%	54.8%	8.5%	44.1%
Never	1.4%	12.9%	2.2%	9.3%

[derived from Table 2.8]

(The Lifestyle Survey categories of Once a quarter, Twice a year and Once a year have been amalgamated for the purposes of this comparison).

Overall, it appears that the sample members were slightly less assiduous in regular attendance, displaying a perceptible shift towards monthly visits rather than weekly and being more likely to restrict themselves to special occasions. Non-members of the sample were even more inclined to be sparse in their attendance with almost 13% never getting to church.

The most frequent attenders on the basis of the Haddington survey are likely to be over 60, female, either retired or a housewife, and have had a Christian upbringing (see next section); in contrast, those least likely to be there on a weekly basis are the young (under 24), male, full-time workers who did not attend regularly as children.

**Q11 As a child did you go to church regularly?**

Slightly more people attended church as a child (86%) than are currently members (82%), the likelihood of this being the pattern increasing with age. The Lifestyle Survey (Q24 & Table 4.7) asked if a devotional life (praying, Bible reading) was the rule in childhood, and a comparison between the two reveals some interesting differences.

Table 9  
Childhood Church Attendance

	SAMPLE		LIFESTYLE SURVEY	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Yes	80.0%	89.0%	32.4%	40.7%
No	20.0%	11.0%	60.2%	51.5%
Don't know			7.4%	7.8%

[derived from Table 4.7]

Two points are worth making here - firstly, the proportion of church members continuing a lifetime habit of attending a place of worship is high indeed in the present sample; and secondly, a devotional life patently involves far more than simply going to church as far as most people in the Lifestyle Survey are concerned. In that study, the relevant question used the expression "*devotional life*" which was defined as regular Bible reading and prayer.

**Q12 Do you regard yourself as a Christian?**

Table 10  
Christian Perception

	SAMPLE		LIFESTYLE SURVEY	
	C of S	Non	C of S	Non
Yes	96.6%	74.2%	86.9%	57.9%
No	3.4%	25.8%	3.6%	18.2%
Don't know			9.4%	23.9%

[derived from Table 2.14]

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Apart from an extremely high positive response rate in the sample (even among the non-church members) compared with the Survey, which could be due either to a bias in the selection process or to an exceptionally 'religious' wider population, the only other observable feature is that gender is NOT a determining factor here whereas it was found to be in the Lifestyle study [Table 4.10]. As might be expected, the older the respondent, the more likely a positive response although the strength of correlation is admittedly low.

### Q13 How often do you pray?

Table 11  
Prayer

	SAMPLE		LIFESTYLE SURVEY	
	C of S	Non	C of S	Non
Daily	46.2%	9.7%	35.9%	19.1%
Weekly	13.1%	12.9%	23.9%	12.6%
Occas.	34.5%	48.4%	24.4%	22.8%
Never	6.2%	29.0%	15.8%	45.5%

[derived from Table 2.9]

(Lifestyle Survey group 'Weekly' includes '2 or 3 times a week')

Two main differences noticeable here are the polarisation apparent in the sample population between those who pray daily (almost half) and those who do so on an occasional basis (over one third), and the tendency of non-church members to at least pray sometimes rather than not at all. One possible explanation of this lies in the nature of the survey method itself: those who carried out the interviews were, by and large, elders in the kirk and it is conceivable that respondents were eager to give a 'good impression' by over-estimating their prayer frequency.

Those most likely to pray weekly were the elderly [60+] women, especially those who were widowed or divorced/separated, usually retired, and more often than not very regular church attenders. Conversely, those least likely to pray could be described as young [under 24] men having a full-

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time job - ie the financially and socially independant. It is interesting to note that the authors of the Lifestyle Survey see a possible explanation for this predominance of women in the combination of their familial role, relatively restricted social world, and greater likliehood of being inculcated with moral standards by their parents (ibid., p80). As will be seen later, frequency of prayer was a significant factor in a number of relationships, and when combined to form an index of commitment, proved to be by far the most important factor of all.

### **Q14 How would you describe the importance of your faith to you?**

This question presented four statements to the interviewee, each of which could be responded to in one of five ways: the results are tabulated below.

Table 12  
Statements of Faith

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	D/K
Affects whole life	31.6%	41.1%	17.7%	6.3%	3.2%
Helps in crisis	43.5%	41.3%	6.5%	5.1%	3.6%
Makes no difference	2.4%	11.3%	50.0%	34.7%	1.6%
Haven't got any	2.6%	2.6%	34.2%	55.6%	5.1%

Considering the fact that 82% of the sample were church members and 93% regarded themselves as Christians, it is somewhat surprising to find that 24% overall either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the first statement, and 11.6% likewise with the second (less sweeping) one. This finding is compounded by the response to statement number three in which almost 14% agreed at least that their faith made no difference to them. The 5% who had no faith accords reasonably well with the 7% non-Christian result.

Sex did not appear to make a significant difference to the outcome in this instance, although age did - but only as regards the first statement: here,

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those aged 60+ were much more likely to strongly agree.

Education emerged as a significant determinant in statement two insofar as those who had been to college/university were more inclined to disagree, whilst those who had not tended to agree or strongly agree.

Statements 1,2, and 4 revealed the importance of Employment as a factor: those working full-time were more likely to disagree with 1 & 2 compared with the retired who tended to strongly agree, and all those who strongly agreed with 4 were in full-time work.

Of much greater significance was Attendance over all four statements, together with a correspondingly stronger correlation. As attendance increased, so did tendency towards 'Strongly agree' as the chosen response to statements 1 & 2, and towards 'Strongly disagree' to 3 & 4.

These findings compare broadly with Q37 in the Lifestyle Survey which asked 'Do you believe that God controls our lives here and now?', to which 71.5% of Church members replied in the affirmative along with 40.7% non-church members [Table 2.15].

### *6.3.2.1 Commitment*

As explained in the introductory section, it was decided at the outset that some measure of overall faith-commitment was a desirable objective, especially since parallel studies (such as they are) tend to be weak in this area. The Lifestyle Survey does devote a whole chapter (Five) to considering the effects of commitment, but the methodological basis for such an index leaves much to be desired. In the words of the report,

*'Commitment to the church' was in this instance gauged by people's responses to the question in the schedule that asked them 'what is your level of commitment to the church?' Respondents were then asked to insert a tick in whichever one of four boxes came closest to their own view of their level of church commitment (ibid., p101),*

Such a subjective assessment may have been satisfactory within the context of that report, but for the purposes of the present study, a rather more objective and comprehensive measure was needed.

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In the States, audience studies of religious programmes have been undertaken<sup>1</sup> but their value is limited by their particular context; in the UK, two surveys have proved useful - one undertaken by the ITA in 1970 (and updated by the IBA in 1987), entitled 'Religion in Britain & Northern Ireland : A Survey of Popular Attitudes', the other commissioned by the Church of Scotland's Board of Social Responsibility and published under the title 'Lifestyle Survey' (1987), already referred to extensively above.

Factors such as age, sex, socio-economic status etc. are commonly held to be significant in all these studies, but religious factors are inherently more difficult to define with any degree of precision. Nevertheless, it was decided to attempt a refinement of the concept in order to assess whether it could explain different viewing patterns, either by itself or in conjunction with more familiar factors.

Virts<sup>2</sup> refers to 'dimensions of religiosity' and 'predictors of religiosity' in his paper, the former comprising both belief and involvement components, the latter pointing up age and gender in particular as correlates. More particularly, he cites Roof and Hoge (1980)<sup>3</sup> as testing the adequacy of five theories in explaining religious involvement: these are as follows -

1. Deprivation - "people who are socio-economically deprived turn to religion for relief and thus become more involved in religious activities", (of which Virts clearly regards watching religious programmes as one)

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<sup>1</sup>Such studies include -

Buddenbaum, J. (1979) *The audience for religious television programs*, M.A. Thesis, Indiana University

Dennis, J. (1962) *An analysis of the audience of religious radio and television programs in the Detroit Metropolitan area*, Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan

Gerbner, G. et al. (1984) *Religion and television*, Philadelphia: Annenberg School of Communications, University of Pennsylvania

Horsfield, P. (1984) *Religious television: the American Experience*, New York: Longman

Solt, D. (1971) *A study of the audience profile for religious broadcasts in Ondonga County*, Ph.D., dissertation, Syracuse University

These (and more) are cited in a Paper presented at the Speech Communication Association Convention, Chicago Illinois on November 15, 1986 by Paul H. Virts of the Christian Broadcasting Network and entitled 'Gender and Age as Predictors of Religious TV Viewing' (unpublished).

<sup>2</sup>op cit, [see footnote above]

<sup>3</sup>Roof, W. and Hoge, D. (1980) *Church involvement in America: Social factors affecting membership and participation*, Review of Religious Research, 1980, 21, 405-426

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2. Child-rearing - "parents of young children are more likely to get involved in religious activities for the sake of their children"

3. Social learning - "religious involvement is learned from the groups one belongs to"

4. Localism - "people who are more locally oriented and belong to tight-knit groups of people are more likely to be involved in religious activities"

5. Value structure - "people with more traditional values are more likely to be highly involved in religious activities".

The authors of the study concluded that localism and value structure were probably the most important determinants, a view supported by Roberts and Davidson (1984)<sup>1</sup>.

Virts notes that "interestingly, they found that a person's religious beliefs have the *least* effect on religious involvement", a finding which would suggest that watching religious TV in the United States may be substantially different to the equivalent activity in the UK.

The ITA survey referred to above also attempted to measure 'religiosity', seeking to go beyond previous efforts in this direction which had combined two factors - the importance of religion to the individual, and the extent to which he/she supported traditional Christian beliefs. By 1968 it was clear that very 'religious' people might not necessarily hold to these, so two indices were compiled separately. Accordingly, respondents were classified by the number of 'religious' replies they gave to a series of statements which included the following variables -

1. They are 'very religious' or 'fairly religious'
2. " " 'certain' that to lead a good life it is necessary to have some religious belief
3. They are certain that without belief in God life is meaningless
4. " " " religion helps to maintain the standards and morals of society

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<sup>1</sup>Roberts, M, and Davidson, J, (1984) *The nature and sources of religious involvement*, Review of Religious Research, 1984, 25.



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5. They are certain that there is a God
6. They believe that God does watch each person
7. They are 'very likely' to think of God when they are worried
8.       "                       "                       or 'fairly likely' to think of God  
when they are happy
9. Their everyday lives are affected 'a great deal' or 'quite a  
lot' by their religious beliefs.

Those who made none or one 'religious' reply were classified as ' -- '

"	"	two to four	"	replies	"	"	' - '
"	"	five to seven	"	"	"	"	' + '
"	"	eight or nine	"	"	"	"	' ++ '

[The same index was used by the IBA in their follow-up survey in 1987]

According to this, 51% of the sample had a positive 'religiosity' quotient, whilst the remaining 49% were either ' - ' or ' -- ', the likelihood being that women would be in the former category (ie. positively religious) and that religiosity increased with age. The comparable figures for 1987 were 36% and 64%.

Besides being semantically obscure, and slightly derogative, the term 'religiosity' still fails to tackle the whole area of behavioural characteristics, bound in as it is to belief structures, especially those aspects of behaviour to do with the working-out of faith. Consequently, the term 'commitment' was preferred in the context of the present study, being defined as the extent to which a person's beliefs affected his/her lifestyle, and assessed by measuring such factors as frequency of prayer and church attendance, church membership, assent to specific faith statements, and perception of own Christian status. The term still fails to completely solve the problem of quantifying 'faith in action', but at least it provides a measure of accuracy not available previously. Members of other faiths would not in this instance be regarded as 'committed' since it is a measure of specifically Christian faith and activity.

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Using this measure, out of the total sample population 11.4% were identified as 'highly committed', and 2.8% 'high non-faith'. No attempt was made to grade responses since the whole point of the exercise was to identify extreme values, and it would seem that this has been achieved; to claim that 51% (or even 36%) of the population is positively 'religious' is of little value when engaged in searching out significant factors. Much more helpful is an index which separates out a relatively small sub-group which can then be tested against the overall sample.

The most interesting finding to emerge from this procedure was that none of the usual socio-economic variables were significantly associated with it. Neither Age, Sex, Education, Marital status, Employment or SEG were significant at the 0.05 level, and yet Commitment itself proved to be highly significant when determining how often people watched religious programmes, which ones they watched, why they watched them, how they watched them, what they got out of them, and what they thought of them. [See s6.3.3 below].

### *6.3.2.2 Fragility*

The second reclassification exercise was aimed at identifying those people who might legitimately be thought of as displaying some evidence of social or economic fragility, and who consequently might be expected to behave differently in terms of viewing habits. The term 'Fragility' was chosen purely as a description of socio-economic status - not of openness to exploitation - and as such was felt to be preferable to other labels. The initial test run isolated a group whose members were all over 60, on their own, and retired: a total of 11.4% of the sample met these specifications. (Future runs were expanded to cater for the unemployed married man or young person as additional examples of high fragility). When cross-tabulated with other variables, significant relationships were found in the following cases - Sex, Membership, Attendance, Prayer, statements of Faith, Frequency of viewing religious programmes, Reason for watching them, Way in which they watched, Feelings at the end, Effects on person viewing, and Statements concerning the place of religious broadcasting on TV. The

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highly fragile person was likely to be a female member of a church, weekly attender there, someone who prayed daily, and who strongly agreed that their faith affected their whole life. This same person was also much more likely to watch religious programmes on a weekly basis, and it is to these viewing patterns that we now turn.

### **6.3.3 Viewing characteristics (Q15 to Q27)**

#### **Q15 How often do you watch TV?**

Table 13  
Frequency of Viewing

	Male	Female	All
< 1hr per day	9.3%	7.2%	7.8%
1-3hrs	57.4%	47.6%	50.6%
3-6hrs	27.8%	38.1%	35.0%
> 6hrs	5.6%	7.1%	6.7%

There was no statistically significant difference in the amount of television consumed by the two sexes - men were only slightly more likely to watch between 1 and 3 hours, and women between 3 and 6 hours. Neither was age a determining factor overall, the only noticeable trends being that the youngest group tended to watch least along with those aged between 35 and 44, and those in between tended to be the heaviest consumers. Where a relationship did exist was in the case of Education (those having attended college being lighter viewers than their non-attending counterparts), and Employment (students and full-time workers watched least, part-time workers and unemployed, most). Overall consumption appeared to be unaffected by the viewer's commitment or fragility.

Q16 When you watch, are you usually -

Table 14  
Social Context of Viewing

	Male	Female	All
Alone	10.9%	23.8%	19.9%
With family	81.8%	73.0%	75.7%
With friends	7.3%	3.2%	4.4%

Both Age and Sex played a part in determining the social context of the sample viewer: those under 24 tended to watch with friends, those between 25 and 59 with family, and those over 60, alone (the correlation in this instance was 0.5); as regards gender, females were more likely to watch alone - possibly due to their familial role or retirement status, and men tended to watch with family or friends.

Testing for Membership revealed a connection with solitary viewing, reinforced by the finding that High Fragility was linked quite strongly (0.65) with the same, although a small proportion (25%) of these single people did watch with their family.

Q17 Do you watch religious programmes -

Table 15  
Frequency of Viewing Religious Programmes

	Male	Female	All
Weekly	41.8%	60.6%	54.9%
Monthly	20.0%	16.5%	17.6%
Less often	30.9%	16.5%	20.9%
Never	7.3%	6.3%	6.6%

The frequency with which a viewer watched religious programmes was significantly affected by his/her age, sex, marital status, education and employment, but commitment showed the strongest correlation (0.37). As age increased, so did frequency in direct proportion, with women being more

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likely to watch every week and men monthly or less. In line with the trend noted above whereby non-college respondents tended to be heavier viewers, here it was carried over insofar as they were significantly more likely to watch every week. When we turn to employment, it is the retired who watch most, and full-time workers the least.

85% of highly committed respondents watched at least monthly, 55% of them weekly. Of those who were recoded as high non-faith, 57% never watched at all, but 43% claimed to see at least some programmes, albeit infrequently. In comparison, 90% of highly fragile respondents watched every week.

### Q18 Why not?

Table 16  
Reasons for Non-Viewing

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	D/K
Dull	5.1%	51.3%	33.3%	2.6%	7.7%
Wrong time	14.3%	38.1%	28.6%	7.1%	11.9%
Embarrassed	0.0%	2.6%	66.7%	30.8%	0.0%
Strange language	2.6%	13.2%	60.5%	18.4%	5.3%
Not interested	24.4%	26.8%	46.3%	2.4%	0.0%
Badly made	2.6%	15.8%	52.6%	2.6%	26.3%
Other (5.7%)					

By far the most popular reasons for not watching religious programmes were that they were dull, screened at the wrong time, or the viewers themselves were just not interested in them: each polled over 50% of the votes. Of these, the strongest views were registered against a lack of interest - not necessarily a fault in the programmes as such, but possibly suggestive of a preconceived image in the mind of the respondent which went unchallenged by the programme-makers. On the positive side, those same producers have little to fear apparently in the way of language or image barriers, although some 26% of respondents weren't sure if the product was badly made or not.

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Those who felt that the programme times were wrong tended to be amongst the lower-middle ages.

Among other reasons for not watching, the following were offered:-

- I believe in their morality but not their mysticism
- They make you feel guilty
- The methods used
- They are biased
- Religion is not well presented
- A lack of preaching Christ

Most of these rely on theological arguments, although 3 and 4 could be taken as criticisms of the agenda-setting process rather than any distaste of religious content per se. A full list of these and other reasons can be found in Appendix IV.

### **Q19 Can you name any?**

The respondent was given an opportunity of naming up to three programmes in any order, no particular significance being attached to their position except insofar as the first one named was presumably most strongly associated in the viewer's mind with the notion of religious programmes.

A straightforward analysis of frequencies revealed that in first position two names between them polled 84%, the most popular (by a margin of 2:1) being 'Songs of Praise' with 56%, followed by 'Highway' with 28%. After them, a considerable distance behind, came 'High Spirits' and 'Late Call' each with 7%, the remainder ('This is the Day' and 'Heart of the Matter') collecting a mere 2%. More than 90% of respondents were able to name one programme at least, although clearly their choice showed considerable limitations.

As for second choice, for which 76% were able to offer a suggestion, 'Highway' (43%) and 'Songs of Praise' (31%) again accounted for the vast majority of votes, although now they had switched position. Out of the nine remaining programmes to be named, only 'Late Call' (9%) and 'High Spirits' (8%) polled more than 5%.

In third place, completed by 50% of respondents, the same top four

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programmes appeared in the top six together with 'Everyman' (10%) and 'Daily Service' (7%), although the running order had changed again with 'Late Call' first (24%), 'Highway' second (21%), 'High Spirits' third (17%) and 'Songs of Praise' fifth (8%).

Other programmes named more than once were:-

'Heart of the Matter'

'Voyager'

'Rock Gospel Show'

'Chapter and Verse'

Out of those named, three did not appear in print on the form (Q20) - 'Daily Service', 'Voyager' and 'Chapter & Verse'. Perhaps the most surprising feature of this question was the infrequency with which the morning service was mentioned, possibly because the respondents were not regular viewers of this, or more simply, they did not regard it (for some reason) as a religious programme.

Conversely, three programmes on the list failed to get a mention at all - 'Articles of Faith', 'Fables, Parables & Miracles' and 'Sunday View' - although to be fair, the latter two are breakfast TV offerings and the ITV version of this was subject to industrial dispute for much of the survey period.

The dominance of 'Songs of Praise' and 'Highway' came as no surprise at all, especially since Haddington was featured in the latter programme during the course of the survey<sup>1</sup>, and merely confirms published viewing figures which regularly credit each with an audience of some 6 millions<sup>2</sup>. Whether 'Highway' can be correctly defined as a religious programme, however, is a matter for debate: its claim to such status probably rests more on its timing - in the traditional 'God-slot' - than on any particular content.

When we turn to examine significant variables, only Status and Employment appear to affect the respondents' choice, and then only in one case each.

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<sup>1</sup>Unfortunately, there is no way of assessing the precise impact this had on viewer response

<sup>2</sup>According to the latest figures published by the IBA (Godwatching: Viewers, Religion and Television, 1988), 56% of the population watch religious programmes each month - approx. 30m.

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Married people were slightly more likely to nominate 'Highway' as first choice, single and widowed viewers - 'Songs of Praise', and separated/divorced - 'High Spirits'. As far as second choice was concerned, the only people to mention morning services were housewives, 'Highway' proved most popular amongst the retired and full-time workers, whilst twice as many part-timers as might be expected voted for 'Songs of Praise'. Third place offerings gave no evidence of specific factors that might have affected their choice.

**Q20 When did you last watch the following programmes?**

Table 17  
Programmes Last Watched

	<1wk	<1mth	Longer	Never
Songs of Praise	39.6%	30.5%	28.0%	1.8%
Highway	35.1%	42.9%	16.9%	5.2%
Everyman/Heart of Matter	1.6%	8.0%	25.6%	64.8%
Epilogue/Late Call*	10.9%	18.2%	46.0%	24.8%
Rock Gospel Show	0.0%	0.8%	32.0%	67.2%
Articles of Faith	0.0%	1.6%	4.0%	94.4%
Fables, Parables & Miracles	0.0%	0.8%	4.0%	95.2%
This is the Day	3.8%	7.6%	11.5%	77.1%
Sunday View	0.0%	1.6%	4.9%	93.5%
High Spirits* 27.1%	13.5%	5.3%	54.1%	

\* Screened only in Scotland

[see Appendix I for full scheduling details]

Bearing in mind that 55% of respondents claimed to watch religious programmes at least once a week [Q17 above], and that due to the back-to-back scheduling of the two top choices it would be impossible to view both unless either a video recording was made or the weektime repeat taken as an alternative, it would seem likely that most people watch either 'Songs of Praise' or 'Highway' regularly, and supplement their diet with one of the alternatives - probably 'High Spirits' (a 'one-off' series) or 'Late Call'. It could also be surmised that three programmes at least could be withdrawn without materially affecting overall viewing patterns, since more than 90% of people interviewed had never watched them, with a further one



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already axed by the time of the survey - 'The Rock Gospel Show'.

Only two programmes appear to be watched on a weekly basis by the majority of viewers - 'Songs of Praise' and 'High Spirits'; even the ubiquitous 'Highway' tended to be watched rather less frequently than one might suppose. 'Late Call' in particular seemed to be a sporadic event for most of its viewers, although the majority of programmes shared its tendency to attract audiences only once in a while.

### **Profile of the regular viewer:**

1. 'Songs of Praise'. He or she (there is no statistical evidence that one is more likely) is over 45, a non-graduate, and if older then retired.

2. 'Highway'. Also over 45, but even more likely to be 60+, probably female, non-graduate and retired.

3. 'Late Call'. Probably male, aged between 45 and 59, but just as likely to be a graduate as not, and working full-time.

4. 'This is the Day'. Three times more likely to be over 60 than anything else, female, widowed, and retired.

5. 'High Spirits'. Probably over 60, but could be in the 35-44 age band; if the former, then also retired, otherwise working part-time or a housewife.

Apart from 'Late Call', the probability is that regular viewers will also be highly fragile as defined above.

If these trends are substantiated by the findings of the wider survey, broadly speaking it can be said that religious programmes are watched in the main by elderly female viewers, but not to the extent that has been suggested by many commentators on the American experience (see, for example, Horsfield 1984).

**Q21 For those you watched less than a week ago, can you remember what they were about?**

65.7% of viewers claimed that they could indeed recall such programmes, as against 31.4% who could not. If this is true, then religious programmes

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appear to communicate (potentially at least) with a commendable degree of efficiency. It would have been an interesting exercise to test the accuracy of such claims by asking for more detailed reports, but the problems involved in attempting to validate them were felt to outweigh the usefulness of any insights gained thereby.

The only factors found to significantly affect the likelihood of recall were Age and Commitment: those over 45 were more likely to say 'Yes' (and vice versa), as were those described as highly committed. It was slightly surprising to find no correlation with the way people watched a programme, or the reason why.

**Q22 Why did you watch them? Was it for -**

Table 18

Reasons for viewing

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	D/K
Company	1.8%	12.4%	61.9%	21.2%	2.7%
Guidance	4.2%	40.7%	43.2%	9.3%	2.5%
Entertainment	10.7%	54.1%	25.4%	9.0%	0.8%
Information	9.8%	64.2%	20.3%	5.7%	0.0%
General Interest	18.7%	75.3%	4.7%	1.3%	0.0%
Challenge	3.6%	17.9%	63.4%	8.9%	6.3%
Other	[19.9%]				

The most frequently cited reason for watching religious programmes, at both levels of agreement, was 'general interest' (94%), followed by 'information' (74%) and 'entertainment' (64.8%). With regard to the other reasons suggested, most felt that these were not valid for them, the least popular being 'company' (83.1% in disagreement). When one considers the audience profiles outlined above, it is slightly surprising to find that so few people regard such programmes as sources of companionship. Slightly more than 20% accepted that they were looking to be challenged in some way.

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Among the additional reasons, (ie. not appearing on the forms), offered by respondents, the following received more than one mention each:-

- Worship
- Like listening to hymns
- Singing
- Participation
- Compensate for missing church
- Like seeing places they visit.

At least four of those reasons, and probably the first five, fall into the same category of 'worship' and raise questions about how far a viewer can be said to be participating in an act of worship.

Of those that watched for 'company', 50% were over 60, equally likely to be male or female, but more likely to be non-graduates. Those seeking guidance tended to be either middle-aged (35-44) or over 60, male, non-graduates, and regular (weekly) church attenders. Viewers hoping to be entertained were predominantly married, but otherwise lacking in distinctive features; those looking for information - housewives, retired or if working then part-time and self-employed. The most significant factors as regards viewing out of 'general interest' proved to be Education (non-graduates were more likely to strongly agree), and Employment (part-timers and retired people similarly). The two age groups most likely to be looking for a challenge were the 35-44 group, and those over 60, more often than not regular church attenders and in the managerial/professional occupations as well.

When we turn to 'Commitment' as a possible factor, it emerges that it is significantly related to all the reasons save 'General interest', and in two particular instances is correlated very highly indeed - 'Guidance' (0.8) and 'Challenge' (1.0). As might be expected, those who take their faith most seriously, also seem to take their viewing seriously insofar as they appear to regard it as an integral part of their learning environment. In addition, those wishing to be guided also tend to be amongst the most fragile.

Q23 When you watch them, do you -

Table 19  
Viewer Participation

	Always	Usually	Some- times	Never	D/K
Watch closely	26.9%	42.1%	22.1%	8.3%	0.7%
Join in	14.7%	21.0%	39.9%	24.5%	0.0%
Watch, but not all time	6.2%	31.8%	45.0%	17.1%	0.0%
Get on with other things	5.2%	12.9%	48.3%	33.6%	0.0%

69% of viewers claimed to watch closely more often than not, 35% of them going so far as to join in to some extent with the activities on the screen. This compares favourably with the findings of the ITA Survey (1970) in which 56% of those interviewed said they paid attention (ibid., p38). It also compares favourably with another finding in that same section, namely that 24% of people usually leave the set on but don't really watch (ibid.); the equivalent figure here is 18.1%. Whether this suggests a general trend towards paying closer attention to televisual material, or that the sample currently being analysed is more attentive than normal, is something which might become clearer when the full survey is complete.

Of those who always watch closely, the probability is that they are over 60, retired, regular church attenders and 'highly fragile' as well as being 'committed', and it is these same people who tend to join in frequently. In contrast, the casual viewer tended to be working full-time and an infrequent church attender, while the 'non-watcher' was probably female, aged between 35 and 44 and in work - ie. neither particularly 'fragile' nor 'committed'.

Q24 When religious programmes are on, do you -

Table 20

Viewer Intention

	Always	Usually	Some- times	Never	D/K
Turn on specifically	28.8%	23.7%	30.1%	17.3%	0.0%
Watch if on	3.1%	27.6%	42.5%	26.8%	0.0%
Look elsewhere	9.8%	12.3%	40.2%	37.7%	0.0%
Leave set on...	1.7%	3.4%	27.7%	66.4%	0.8%

When the ITA asked a similar question in 1970, 34% of those interviewed stated that they definitely switched on their sets, slightly more in the case of women (40%), and considerably so with the viewers of 'high religiosity' - 67%. The comparable figures from Haddington are 52.5% overall, either usually or always turning on specifically, these being predominantly female and over 60, but with no significant difference for commitment, despite a correlation with frequency of church attendance; in this instance, fragility seems to be the key factor.

It would appear that, provided a person actually starts to watch a religious programme (and that is a big proviso), he or she will generally stay with it, but on the other hand, only 29% of a largely church-based sample consistently turned on to watch such a programme, and presumably a wider sample would show less enthusiasm overall.

Q25 Which of the following statements describe the way you feel at the end of the programmes -

Table 21  
Viewer Responses

	Always	Usually	Some- times	Never	D/K
1.Sense of belonging	9.2%	21.4%	38.9%	26.0%	4.6%
2.More certain	5.8%	16.5%	34.7%	34.7%	8.3%
3.Cheered up	12.6%	34.3%	43.4%	8.4%	1.4%
4.Better informed	10.9%	27.5%	45.7%	15.9%	0.0%
5.Inspired	6.5%	13.8%	41.5%	34.1%	4.1%
6.Depressed	0.0%	0.8%	17.2%	79.5%	2.5%
7.Uncertain of my faith	0.8%	2.5%	15.6%	76.2%	4.9%
8.Confirmed...	15.2%	29.6%	32.8%	15.2%	7.2%
Other [9.7%]					

In no case did more than 50% of the viewers regularly feel anything specified above, the most frequent responses being 'cheered up' (46.9%) and 'confirmed in what I believe' (44.8%) along with 'better informed' (38.4%) in third place. As for the rest, they were either experienced sporadically (so, 'sense of belonging', 'more certain', and 'inspired'), or never - most noticeably 'depressed' and 'uncertain'. It appears, then, that religious programmes predominantly fit in with or reinforce people's existing belief structures, and seldom confuse or cause negative reactions.

When we turn to examining those who always experienced a particular feeling, 'a sense of belonging' was most closely associated with the 35-44 age group, and those working part-time; those 'more certain' tended to be non-graduates; being 'cheered up' seemed to be something the elderly (over 60) commonly experienced, especially those who left school without proceeding to college, and was correlated with 'high fragility' - the same group in fact who felt 'better informed'; viewers who were always 'inspired'

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seemed more likely to be either middle-aged housewives or retired, and certainly 'highly committed' - again, the same group who always felt 'confirmed in what (they) believe', except that here 'fragility' also proved significant. Gender, Marital status, Employment and SEG had no discernible effect on these feelings.

Other feelings suggested by respondents more than once -

- Interested in the things enjoyed
- Disappointed with Christian content
- No impact.

When the results from Q25 were cross-tabulated with other factors - in particular Reasons for watching (Q22), Way in which people watched (Q23), and the extent to which people Intended to watch (Q24), significant correlations were found in the case of Q23 (which was to be expected), but also with regard to the others. So, for example, viewers who agreed they were looking for 'company' were much more likely to derive a sense of 'belonging' than not, but then so were those looking for 'guidance', 'information', 'interest' and 'challenge'. The table below summarises the relationships between those who 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' about a particular reason for watching, and those who 'always' or 'usually' felt something at the end of a programme:-

Table 22  
Intentions & Responses Compared

	Sense of Belonging	More Certain	Cheered up	Better Informed	Inspired	Depressed	Uncertain	Confirmed
Company	/	/						
Guidance	/	/	/	/	/			/
Entertainment			/	/				
Information	/	/	/	/	/			/
Interest	/		/	/				/
Challenge	/	/	/		/			/

[/ indicates significant relationship]

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In general it appears that 'Reasons' and 'Feelings' are correctly related in the sense that the expected response was realised, but over and above that, many side effects were apparently experienced - so, those looking for guidance and information were just as likely to come away with a number of different (positive) feelings as the predicted one, whilst those wanting company tended to find a greater degree of certainty in addition.

As regards the negative feelings - depression and uncertainty, no specific relationships emerged.

The people most likely to regularly experience a particular feeling at the end of the programme were, not unsurprisingly, those who watched with the greatest amount of attention. Statistically significant relationships were found between all six feelings registered above (either 'usually' or 'always') and those who either watched closely on a regular basis or joined in with the programme. Conversely, viewers who were in the habit of getting on with other things were never likely to experience them.

A similar state of affairs exists with regard to the 'Intention' of the viewer with regard to religious programmes: for those who turned on just to see them as a matter of course, the likelihood was that they would derive the satisfaction they were hoping for (as well as picking up certain side benefits on the way), whereas in the case of people who habitually scanned the other channels to see what alternatives were available, the probability is that they would not feel anything.

### **Q26 Has watching a religious programme ever made you -**

Table 23  
Viewer Effects

	Yes	No	D/K
Go to church more often	5.8%	91.7%	2.6%
Go to church less often	1.4%	98.6%	0.0%
Turn to God	24.8%	71.6%	3.5%
Turn away from God	0.7%	98.6%	0.7%
Change the way you live...	7.3%	90.7%	2.0%
Take life more seriously	24.5%	70.9%	4.6%



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Clearly, whatever else religious programmes may do, they do not appear to change people's behaviour patterns, although there is evidence that their attitudes may well be influenced.

The only socio-economic factors which emerged from the analysis at a significant level in this context were Status, Education and Fragility - even Age and Sex do not seem to matter where effects are concerned. Out of those who had been moved to turn to God, widowers were almost twice as likely to be involved as not, as were the 'highly fragile'; with those caused to take life more seriously, a lack of higher education seemed to increase the chances of such a change taking place. Other than that, there is an overwhelming absence of statistical relationships to give any sort of insight into how or why someone is affected by a religious programme.

On a more positive note, a connection was found between people's viewing habits and Q26, at least in certain cases. Those who watched for 'company' were more likely than expected to have changed their lifestyle, and those who strongly agreed that they watched out of 'general interest' were twice as likely to 'take life more seriously' than not. 'Turning to God' turned out to be a stronger possibility if the viewer always paid close attention to the programme, and conversely for those who got on with other things. One slightly ambiguous finding here was that there was a higher probability of a person being prompted to go to church more often if he/she always 'watched, but not all of the time'.

**Q27 What do you think of the following statements on religious programmes?**

Table 24  
Statements Concerning Religious Programmes

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	D/K
Too many	2.7%	2.0%	70.5%	14.8%	10.1%
More controversial	8.1%	36.9%	34.9%	4.7%	15.4%
More Bible-based	12.1%	30.2%	38.9%	2.7%	16.1%
Less intellectual	3.6%	23.7%	54.0%	5.0%	13.7%
More entertaining	9.4%	44.3%	32.9%	3.4%	10.1%

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The only statement with which more than 50% of respondents were in general agreement was - 'They should be more entertaining' (53.7%), whilst 45% felt they should be more controversial and 42.3% more Bible-based. On the other hand, most people (59%) felt that they should not be less intellectual, and 85.3% disagreed with the statement that there are too many religious programmes on television. (This compares with the figure given in the IBA Survey (1988) of 61% who thought the amount of time given to coverage of religion was 'About right' (ibid., p5).

When we turn to the effect of socio-economic factors on these trends, non-graduates were more likely to agree with statement number four ('Less intellectual'), young people (16-24) in particular wanted more entertainment (as did males), whilst those who were fragile tended to disagree; otherwise no significant relationships were observable.

Once again 'commitment' emerged as highly significant and strongly correlated with different attitudes, especially in respect of the third statement ('More Bible-based') and the fourth ('Less intellectual') where highly committed respondents were more likely than others to agree. Conversely, along with the 'fragile' contingent, they expressed strong disagreement over the question of more entertainment.

#### **6.3.4 Conclusions**

These findings indicate that there is much more variety in the 'typical' audience for religious programmes than has previously been suggested, but little evidence of 'changed lives'. They also suggest that viewers tend to take away what they want from their programmes, those looking the hardest finding the most - usually in the form of confirmatory information. The following sections show to what extent (if any) these hold true with respect to the other samples.

## **6.4 Results: Horsham**

### **6.4.1 Introduction**

Between the months of March and May 1988, the second phase of the questionnaire survey took place and a total of 93 forms were completed in the town of Horsham, West Sussex, under the same control conditions as applied in Haddington. Since the sample was spatially coherent, it was decided to compare the results with the first phase (described above) as a separate exercise, in order to discern whether there were any differences which might be attributed to purely local factors<sup>1</sup>.

The form layout and content remained unchanged for this exercise, as did the accompanying notes, data being collected by a mixture of personal interview and self-completion at the discretion of the local administrators.

Similarly, the mode of analysis did not alter from the Haddington study<sup>2</sup>, save in respect to the way in which 'commitment' and 'fragility' were defined within the SPSS-X routines. Since the Horsham sample displayed a very high level of 'committed' respondents and near-absence of 'high non-faith' and 'highly fragile' respondents, it proved impossible to carry out the analysis with respect to these factors as they stood. Therefore, attempts were made to refine the concepts in order to firstly, create a new group for the purposes of cross-tabulation comprising those not explicitly included in either of the existent categories and secondly, to sift out a second 'highly fragile' group derived from those having family commitments but no job. In the event, this second group proved to be null, but the re-definition process did succeed in tightening up a somewhat loose concept, and in no way detracted from a direct comparison with the the Haddington sample since the relationships which emerged there as significant using the old definitions remained significant, albeit with a somewhat weaker correlation.

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<sup>1</sup>See, for clarification, Roof, W. and Hoge, D. (1980), cited above s.6.3.2.1.

<sup>2</sup>In general, tests from the first stage were repeated on this data, the main exception being those involving 'Membership'. This was because 'Commitment' was felt to be a more useful yardstick overall.

## 6.4.2 Socio-Economic Characteristics (Q2 to Q7)

## Q2. AGE

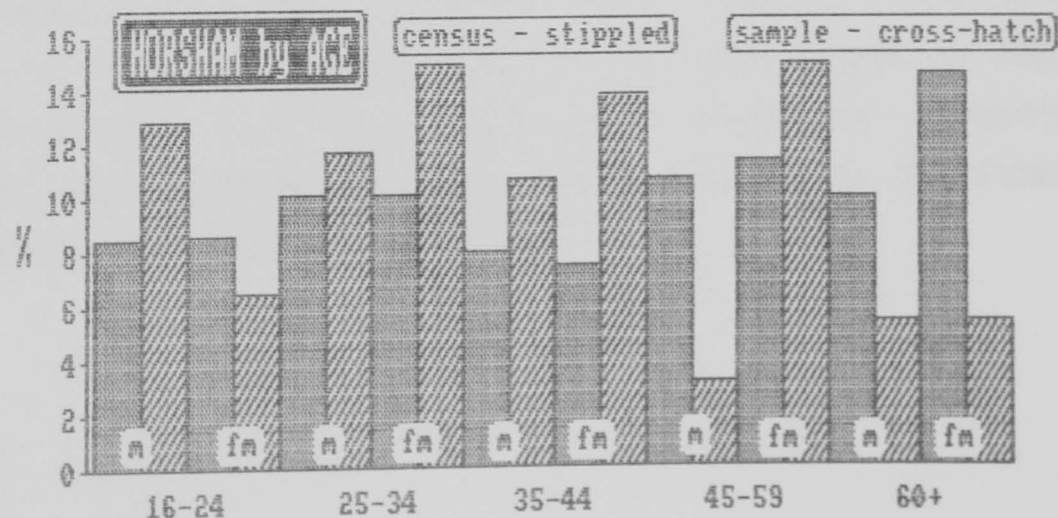
Table 25  
Age; Sample & Census Compared

	Sample	Census	Difference
16-24	19.4%	17.2%	+2.2%
25-34	26.9%	20.4%	+6.5%
35-44	24.7%	15.6%	+9.1%
45-59	18.3%	22.2%	-3.9%
60+	10.8%	24.7%	-13.9%

Whereas the Haddington sample proved 'top-heavy' with respect to the older age groups, here there was a marked bias towards the younger end of the spectrum, and the '35-44' band in particular, reflecting perhaps the rather different congregational structure of the church base. The 60+ age group was strikingly under-represented, and it is to be expected that this will be reflected in the overall pattern of viewing (see Qs 15 - 27 below).

The following bar chart, which breaks the figures down by sex, shows how distortion is greatest in the 45-59 band where the females are considerably over-represented and very few males are present at all; otherwise, the groups are reasonably balanced in this respect.

Fig. 3  
Age by Sex



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Q3. SEX

Table 26  
Sex; Sample & Census Compared

	Sample	Census	Difference
Male	44.1%	47.5%	-3.4%
Female	56.0%	52.6%	+3.4%

Here, the sample reflects the population as a whole to a much greater extent than in Haddington; in that sample, females greatly outnumbered males (70/30), whereas in Horsham, despite a tendency towards the same bias, divergence from the Census is less than 5% although males are still marginally under-represented.

Q4. STATUS

Table 27  
Marital Status

	Married	Single	Widowed	Sep'd/Divorced
Male	70.7%	26.7%	2.4%	0.0%
Female	71.7%	15.1%	7.6%	5.7%

The large number of widowed women so prominent in Haddington is not in evidence here, despite being partly compensated for by a higher percentage in the 'Separated/Divorced' category (5.7% compared with 2.4%). The proportion of women who are married rather than single is almost 5:1, considerably greater than the 3:1 ratio found previously. In contrast, the male element is reasonably consistent, both in terms of the first sample and the Census, as the table below shows.

Table 28  
Marital Status; Sample & Census Compared

		Sample	Census	Difference
Male	Married	70.7%	69.3%	+1.4%
	S/W/D	29.3%	30.7%	-1.4%
Female	Married	71.7%	62.9%	+8.8%
	S/W/D	28.3%	37.1%	-8.8%

The 1.4% variation in the male element compares favourably with the 2% from Haddington, but the slight over-representation of women here is further distorted by a bias towards those who are married, so overall the sample is not as representative although this in itself is not critical.

**Q5. Have you ever been to college/university?**

Whereas 30% of Lifestyle Survey respondents, and 51% of those from Haddington, answered this question in the affirmative, here the proportion proved to be higher still - 61.7% in fact. Those between the ages of 25 and 44 were four times more likely to be in this category than not, while those older than 45 were twice as likely not to have attended than to have gone beyond secondary education. It seems probable that one reason for this may lie in the socio-economic composition of the sample (see Qs 6,7 below), although it is not impossible that regional variation may in itself be of significance here - the South East of England contains a disproportionate amount of wealth associated with the service sectors of the economy, and this is not unimportant in determining opportunities for, and expectations of, higher education.

Q6. Are you -

Table 29  
Employment

	Wkng F/T	Wkng P/T	Stdnt	Hsewife	Ret'd	Unempld
Male	78.1%	7.3%	4.9%	0.0%	9.8%	0.0%
Female	15.4%	28.9%	3.9%	40.4%	11.5%	0.0%

The absence of unemployed respondents is perhaps indicative both of the broad structure of church membership, and the relative affluence of the region - a feature reflected also in the high proportion of women who describe themselves as housewives, which is almost three times as great as that found in Haddington. Comparing the figures with those from the Census, the following picture emerges:-

Table 30  
Employment; Sample & Census Compared

	Working	Student	Retired
Male	75.8% (85.4%)	5.3% (4.9%)	13.3% (9.8%)
Female	46.6% (44.3%)	4.3% (3.9%)	6.1% (11.5%)

[Figures in brackets derived from survey sample]

The over-representation of working males is partly counter-balanced by a relative lack of retired men, but the residue of some 7% is presumably to be sought for in the ranks of the unemployed. Amongst the women, it is the retired group which shows a disproportionate representation, those working or students being in reasonably close proximity to the Census figures.

Q6. What is your job?

More than half (52.7%) of those who answered this question were employed in occupations falling within SEG 1 - ie. of managerial or professional status, and the majority of the remainder (40%) were classified as SEG 2;

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the final 7.3% were engaged in manual work. The comparable figures for the Census were:-

Table 31  
SEG; Sample & Census Compared

	SAMPLE		CENSUS	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
SEG 1	40.0%	12.7%	19.7%	3.4%
2	16.4%	23.7%	15.1%	28.2%
3	1.8%	5.5%	21.5%	5.7%
4	0.0%	0.0%	2.4%	0.3%
5	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.4%
6	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%
7	0.0%	0.0%	1.7%	0.9%

The most significant differences between the two sets of data are in SEG 1, where males are over-represented by a factor of 2 and females by a factor of 4; SEG 3, with an almost complete absence of manual working males; and a total absence in the sample of representatives from the other four categories. As in the case of Haddington, the dominant group is SEG 1; unlike that sample, though, it is the male element that is proportionally strongest here.

The only two relationships in which SEG played a significant role were in the case of church attendance, and when the respondent last watched the Epilogue; interestingly, the correlations identified in the previous analysis did not show up in Horsham, indicating a somewhat sporadic effect which requires that a greater bulk of data be analysed before firm conclusions can be reached.

### 6.4.3 Religious characteristics (Q8 to Q14)

#### Q8. What is your religion?

As with Haddington, only some 2% of respondents did not reply 'Christian'



to this question, choosing the label 'Agnostic' instead. Even when asked whether they regarded themselves as a Christian in Q12, this figure only increased to 6.5%. Here, again, we are dealing almost entirely with a self-confessedly religious sample, and neither Age nor Sex made any significant difference to the way in which people responded.

**Q9. Are you a member of a church?**

Fractionally fewer (80.4% against 82%) people claimed to be church members than in the previous sample, but, somewhat surprisingly, this seemed to be unaffected by any of the expected factors such as Age, Sex, Education and so on. Possibly the 'gathered' nature of the Baptist church transcends socio-economic boundaries, or again it may be that there isn't the same social significance attached to being a member as in East Lothian.

**Q10. How often do you go to services?**

85% of respondents claimed to attend church at least once a week, 7.5% only for special occasions, and the rest infrequently - ie. monthly or less - (6.4%), or never (1.1). This high level is double that found in either the Haddington sample or the Lifestyle Survey, and is further indication of a closely integrated congregational structure perhaps lacking in the Church of Scotland. The only factor to significantly affect attendance was SEG, those in group 1 being slightly more likely than expected to go weekly in contrast to those in group 3 who tended to go more infrequently or not at all.

**Q11. As a child did you go to church regularly?**

Married respondents were slightly less likely to have been brought up as regular churchgoers than single and widowed people, while overall some 27.5% answered in the negative compared with 14% in Scotland. It seems probable that while associational ties may be stronger in the present sample, inherited behavioural and attitudinal patterns are noticeably less influential.

**Q12. Do you regard yourself as a Christian?**

Out of those who answered in the affirmative (93.5%), it was the females over 25 who were more likely to be represented, and the under 25s (especially the males) less likely to be so. Conversely, males under 25 were four times more likely than expected to answer 'No', although the importance of this is limited to the size of the sample. In Haddington, 96.6% of the Church of Scotland respondents replied 'Yes'.

**Q13. How often do you pray?**

Nearly 80% (78.7%) of those interviewed claimed to pray daily, almost twice the proportion found in Haddington, and this provides additional evidence of a highly integrated, committed, church group. Among this group, the older respondents (those over 45) featured more often than expected, especially the women. Out of the 6.4% who replied 'Never', males outnumbered females 5:1 and the majority of them were under 24.

**Q14. How would you describe the importance of your faith to you?**

Table 32  
Statements of Faith

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	D/K
Affects whole life	62.8%	21.3%	8.5%	4.3%	3.2%
Helps in crisis	67.0%	25.5%	2.1%	2.1%	3.2%
Makes no difference	0.0%	5.3%	12.8%	79.8%	2.1%
Haven't got any	0.0%	4.3%	7.5%	84.9%	3.2%

The high level of commitment is again apparent here, with over 80% assenting to both of the first two statements, the vast majority of these 'strongly agreeing'. Whilst the combined percentages were similar in the previous study (c75%), the strength of feeling is much greater here, reflected also in the numbers 'strongly disagreeing' with statements Three

and Four. In each case, those aged over 45 showed a greater propensity to register the expected response, but nowhere did any of the other main socio-economic factors have a bearing on the outcome, unlike Haddington where Education and Employment proved to be significant.

#### **6.4.3.1 Commitment**

Using the modified procedure for isolating those groups displaying high levels of commitment and high non-faith, (which was not materially different from that used previously), it emerged that 54.3% of the total sample fell into the first of these categories, and 7.4% into the second. Considering the fact that the comparable figures for Haddington were 11.4% and 2.8% respectively, it would seem that these findings are consistent with all the indicators described above in pointing towards an inherently different type of church group.

As for significant variables, only Age proved to be relevant as a determinant, with the same age group as above (Q14) markedly affecting the response in terms of high commitment, while 'Commitment' itself was significantly related to 21 other variables (see below, s6.4.4) - only eight less than the Haddington survey.

#### **6.4.3.2 Fragility**

Despite allowing for a second category of 'highly fragile' respondents, namely those married people who were also out of work, in the event there was no-one to fit the criteria. However, 5.3% did fall within the category previously defined (compared with 11.4% in Haddington), while the majority (54.3%) were reclassified as 'self-sufficient'. In several cases, a significant relationship duplicated one from the previous study - the Frequency of watching religious programmes, the Way in which they were watched, and Feelings at the end, but in others there was no such direct overlap. The findings are summarised below:-

Table 33  
Significant Relationships; Haddington & Horsham Compared

	Horsham	Haddington
Total No. of Relationships	15	24
No. unique	5	14
No. common to both	10	

Of those described as 'highly fragile', most were female - significantly more than might be expected; all were regular (weekly) church attenders - even as children; all prayed daily, and the majority tended to watch religious programmes more avidly than the rest of the sample.

#### 6.4.4 Viewing Characteristics (Q15 to Q27)

Q15 How often do you watch TV?

Table 34  
Frequency of Viewing

	Male	Female	All
<1hr per day	34.2%	13.2%	22.3%
1-3hrs "	65.9%	73.6%	70.2%
3-6hrs "	0.0%	5.7%	3.2%
>6hrs "	0.0%	7.6%	4.3%

The most interesting aspect of this viewing pattern is the lack of heavy consumption overall compared with the figures from Haddington; whereas in that sample 35% of respondents watched between 3 and 6 hours daily, the percentage is reduced to less than 4% here - all of them female. Similarly, the proportion of those watching more than 6 hours is smaller in the present sample - albeit by a much narrower margin, and they are all female

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(housewives in fact). At the other end of the scale, three times as many Horsham respondents claim to view less than one hour per day, the discrepancy being even greater among the male contingent, and more 'highly committed' people than expected were represented in this time-slot, as were people in full-time employment.

**Q16 When you watch, are you usually -**

Table 35  
Social Context of Viewing

	Male	Female	All
Alone	22.0%	26.4%	24.5%
With family	75.6%	71.7%	73.4%
With friends	2.4%	1.9%	2.1%

In general, the results here mirror those from the first sample, the only major discrepancy being the number of males watching alone which was twice that found in Haddington. Most viewers apparently watch television in a familial context, reinforcing recent research findings which tend to stress the social function of the activity rather than emphasise its displacing effect<sup>1</sup>. Predictably enough, it was the married respondents who were more likely to watch in this setting and therefore less frequently in a position to view alone or with friends, and this pattern was not significantly affected by gender. Of those who watched alone, the probability was that they were either young (under 24) or old (60+) and retired - and hence 'highly fragile', rather than any other age group.

**Q17 Do you watch religious programmes -**

In line with the reduced consumption generally, specific viewing of religious programmes was also down; in the first sample most people (54.9%) watched them every week -

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<sup>1</sup>For an interesting study of the effect of television on para-social interaction, see for example Rosengren, K & Windahl, S; *Mass Media Consumption as a Functional Alternative* in McQuail (1972)

Table 36  
Frequency of Viewing Religious Programmes

	Male	Female	All
Weekly	19.5%	24.5%	22.3%
Monthly	19.5%	28.3%	24.5%
Less often	43.9%	43.4%	43.6%
Never	17.1%	3.8%	9.6%

here, the equivalent figure is less than half - 22.3%. The largest response category in this instance was 'less often' with almost half (43.6%) falling into it, older females especially tending to watch more frequently and males outnumbering them 4:1 when it comes to not seeing them at all - most of them young (under 24).

Rather surprisingly, perhaps, Commitment did not seem to significantly affect frequency as happened in Haddington, (although Fragility did), one possible explanation being that the perceived need for religious programmes is somewhat less in the relatively close-knit structure of the gathered church. It may be that committed attenders of such bodies derive more satisfaction from their religious activities and consequently do not turn to the television in the same supplementary way, or indeed that they more frequently attend church on a Sunday evening - the time when the two main religious offerings are screened.

Such a hypothesis requires testing, and it is presented here only tentatively.

#### Q18 Why not?

Originally, this question was conceived as a means of clarifying why those people who never watched religious programmes at all failed to do so; in the event, however, some respondents who did watch, but not as often as they might, answered the question anyway. The following results therefore show a mixture of responses.

Table 37  
Reasons for Non-Viewing

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	D/K
Dull	15.0%	55.0%	30.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Wrong time	19.0%	38.1%	23.8%	9.5%	9.5%
Embarrassed	0.0%	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	0.0%
Strange language	0.0%	15.0%	75.0%	10.0%	0.0%
Not interested	10.0%	35.0%	25.0%	20.0%	10.0%
Badly made	5.0%	10.0%	65.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Other [1.1%]					

Two of the statements attracted a positive response from those interviewed, the first one (70%) being the most popular, and the second (57%) close behind. In this respect, the results broadly followed those of the first poll. Opinion on statement five - 'Not interested' - was equally divided, and the rest were rejected fairly consistently. The only reason offered under 'Other' was that they were boring. Of those who thought the programmes dull, or were just not interested in them, most were under 24 and single; on the other hand, the groups most affected by their timing were the married people, and especially housewives.

#### Q19 Can you name any?

The dominance of 'Songs of Praise' revealed itself with even greater forcefulness in the present sample, this programme accounting for almost 80% of the votes cast in first place, the only others polling more than 5% being 'Highway' and 'Everyman' - each with 6.4%. Just over 50% of respondents managed to name more than one religious programme, the top votes being shared equally between 'Songs of Praise' and 'Highway' (24.5%); three more gained more than 5% - 'Rock Gospel Show' (14.3%), 'Everyman' (12.2%), and 'Praise Be' (8.2%) (the end-of-series version of 'Songs of Praise'). As to third place, only 27% managed to offer a name; most popular

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was 'Highway' with 30.8%, next 'Service' (23.1%), and 'Rock Gospel' (15.4%) plus 'Everyman' (11.5%) completed the list of programmes with more than 5% of the votes. The fact that 'Service' was mentioned by so few people underlines the findings of the Haddington survey, and does suggest that this type of programme may not be particularly widely received.

Out of all the factors tested for possible correlation, only 'Commitment' and 'Status' proved significant, and then only with respect to first choice; highly-committed viewers were more likely than expected to name 'Songs of Praise', as were married and widowed people - a finding that tends to be at variance with the results of the previous study. Otherwise, there seems to be no clear-cut pattern.

**Q20 When did you last watch the following programmes?**

Table 38  
Programmes Last Watched

	<1wk	<1mth	Longer	Never
Songs of Praise	23.3%	34.4%	35.6%	6.7%
Highway	3.3%	8.9%	34.4%	53.3%
Everyman/Heart of Matter	6.7%	15.7%	44.4%	32.2%
Epilogue/Late Call*	0.0%	0.0%	15.6%	84.4%
Rock Gospel Show	0.0%	0.0%	56.7%	43.3%
Articles of Faith	0.0%	2.2%	4.4%	93.3%
Fables, Parables & Miracles	0.0%	0.0%	3.1%	96.7%
This is the Day	3.3%	7.8%	11.1%	77.8%
Sunday View	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
High Spirits*	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

\* Screened only in Scotland

Only one programme ('Songs of Praise') succeeded in attracting more than 50% of those interviewed within the last month, and even here less than half of those had seen it in the previous week. 'Highway', equally popular in the Haddington survey, was beaten into third place here by 'Everyman' (itself the only programme to be viewed more often in the past week), and only just maintained a lead over 'This is the Day'.



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Negatively, programmes never watched by more than 50% of people included 'Highway', 'This is the Day', 'Epilogue', 'Articles of Faith' and 'Fables, Parables & Miracles' - considerably more in the case of the latter three. The 'Rock Gospel Show' stands out simply because, despite being off-screen for some time, 56.7% of respondents remembered watching it.

Due to the lack of recent viewers, it is not possible to modify (or indeed confirm) the profiles outlined above (p137), save in respect of 'Songs of Praise' where a significant bias in favour of female viewers was found; in other respects, this particular profile appears to be justified.

**Q21 For those you watched less than a week ago, can you remember what they were about?**

The percentage of respondents who answered in the affirmative here (66.7%) parallels that found in Haddington, the only difference being that Age was not found to have a significant effect in this instance.

**Q22 Why did you watch them? Was it for -**

Table 39  
Reasons for Viewing

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	D/K
Company	0.0%	11.5%	50.6%	35.6%	2.3%
Guidance	1.1%	5.7%	59.8%	29.9%	3.4%
Entertainment	0.0%	50.6%	37.9%	9.2%	2.3%
Information	6.9%	52.9%	29.9%	6.9%	3.4%
General Interest	11.5%	78.2%	5.7%	3.4%	1.1%
Challenge	1.2%	18.6%	58.1%	18.6%	3.5%
Other [25.5%]					

The same three reasons cited in the previous study appear here, in the same order of popularity - 'Interest' (89.7%), 'Information' (62.8%), and Entertainment (50.6%). Similarly, 'Company' as a possible motive was

rejected by more than 85% of respondents. The parallelism was completed by reason 6 - 'Challenge' - which received an equivalent 20% of votes. Only 'Guidance' proved exceptional in its almost complete rejection, contrasting strongly with the 45% agreement in Haddington - support, perhaps, for the hypothesis offered above (p157), namely that members of gathered congregations receive their guidance more directly from Church itself.

Whilst many other reasons were offered in addition to those printed on the form, only one - 'Worship' - received more than one mention, suggesting that those who completed the questionnaires by themselves were responding to the wording of that particular question (see Form in Appendix IV) rather than any spontaneous insight.

Overall, the factors which proved significant in determining this pattern were broadly similar to those found previously; nothing emerged to suggest that those earlier findings were inaccurate or misleading, and in the case of 'Commitment', it is noteworthy that a correlation existed with 'Challenge', adding weight to the argument that it is those most involved with their faith who look to the medium for material to shape that faith.

**Q23 When you watch them, do you -**

Table 40  
Viewer Participation

	Always	Usually	Some- times	Never	D/K
Watch closely	18.2%	33.3%	36.4%	11.4%	1.1%
Join in	3.4%	23.9%	39.8%	31.8%	1.1%
Watch, but not all time	2.2%	22.5%	48.3%	24.7%	2.2%
Get on...	5.7%	12.5%	52.3%	28.4%	1.1%

Somewhat fewer people claimed to regularly watch religious programmes closely than was the case in Haddington (51.5% as opposed to 69%), and similarly with respect to joining in (27.3% and 35.7%). This, however, is not associated with an increased number of respondents watching some of the time - indeed, this figure is also down - so it is difficult to draw

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any firm conclusions overall about regional variations. The range of significant factors, however, still closely follows that found previously.

**Q24 When religious programmes are on, do you -**

Table 41  
Viewer Intentions

	Always	Usually	Some- times	Never	D/K
Turn on specifically	14.6%	25.8%	31.5%	25.8%	2.2%
Watch if on	2.2%	21.1%	50.0%	25.6%	1.1%
Look elsewhere	9.2%	20.7%	37.9%	31.0%	1.1%
Leave set on...	0.0%	0.0%	31.5%	67.4%	1.1%

The number of people turning on just to see a particular programme was closer to that found by the ITA (see p139 above) than to the Haddington figure, reflecting the generally lower level of interest in televised religion. Evidence of such an attitude could also be adduced from the fact that those always doing so were halved, and those looking for alternatives were up by 50%. The sort of person most likely to specifically turn on their set remained the same - a female over 60 - the only difference being that they were probably highly committed, a finding not substantiated previously.

Q25 Which of the following statements describe the way you feel at the end of the programmes -

Table 42  
Viewer Responses

	Always	Usually	Some- times	Never	D/K
1. Sense of belonging	1.1%	15.9%	46.6%	30.7%	5.7%
2. More certain	2.3%	6.8%	47.7%	38.6%	4.5%
3. Cheered up	2.3%	22.7%	56.8%	15.9%	2.3%
4. Better informed	1.1%	18.0%	64.0%	14.6%	2.2%
5. Inspired	1.1%	5.7%	64.8%	25.0%	3.4%
6. Depressed	0.0%	0.0%	25.0%	71.6%	3.4%
7. Uncertain of my faith	0.0%	0.0%	8.0%	88.6%	3.4%
8. Confirmed...	10.2%	30.7%	40.9%	14.8%	3.4%
Other	[8.5%]				

The number of respondents who regularly felt any of these things was down in every instance on Haddington, especially with regard to those who always did so. Only 'Confirmed' as an option came near (41% as opposed to 45%); as for the rest, the whole experience proved to be a less sustained and more fragmented phenomenon. One quarter of the respondents claimed to regularly feel cheered up, one fifth 'Better informed', and slightly less (17%) a sense of belonging. The main point of similarity with the previous sample is in the large majority claiming never to have been depressed or uncertain as a result of watching such a programme.

The range of factors giving rise to this pattern remain broadly similar to that found earlier, the greatest difference being that respondents answering 'Always' or 'Usually' to nos. 1,3 & 8 were more likely than expected to be female - a finding which did not emerge in the previous analysis.

Cross-tabulating these results with those from Q23 (Reasons for watching), the following picture illustrates the extent to which such stated needs were satisfied by programmes generally.

Table 43  
Intentions & Responses Compared

	Sense of Belonging	More Certain	Cheered up	Better Informed	Inspired	Depressed	Uncertain	Confirmed
Company			/		/		/	
Guidance			/	/	/			/
Entertainment								
Information				/				/
Interest		/	/	/				/
Challenge	/	/	/	/	/			/

[/ indicates significant relationship]

The correspondence is by no means as clear as with Haddington, where an almost perfect correlation was found; here, although most viewers came away with something (with the notable exception of those hoping to be entertained), they did not receive what they were avowedly looking for. Those in search of company, for instance, were more likely to be cheered up or inspired than made to feel as if they 'belonged'. Similarly, people looking to be guided might well come away better informed, but not more certain. Interestingly enough, it was those wanting to be challenged who derived the greatest satisfaction, apparently, including a measure of inspiration (the expected result), and the very same reasons were linked to 'Confirmed' as in the previous analysis, suggesting that the process of reinforcement is indeed primary. Perhaps the explanation for the rather haphazard relationship pattern lies in the seemingly low level of interest in the programmes generally; as was noted before, those who are seeking most gain the most, and it may well be that the converse is seen to be working here.

Comparing the relationships found between feelings aroused, the way in which people watched, and whether they intended to see the programmes, with those from the first study, precisely the same picture emerges. Significant correlations existed in the case of those who regularly

watched closely or joined in, as well as with those who switched on specifically - in all these instances, the viewer was more likely to derive a positive feeling of some sort.

Q26 Has watching a religious programme ever made you -

Table 44  
Viewer Effects

	Yes	No	D/K
Go to church more often	1.1%	97.8%	1.1%
Go to church less often	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Turn to God	32.6%	62.9%	4.5%
Turn away from God	1.1%	98.9%	0.0%
Change the way you live your life	5.6%	92.1%	2.2%
Take life more seriously	21.3%	74.2%	4.5%

Rather fewer respondents claimed an increase in church attendance (1.1% as against 5.8%), the same applying in all other categories save one - 'Turn to God'. Here the number of affirmations showed a rise from 24.8%, slightly surprising in light of the rest of the findings, but nevertheless important. What must be remembered is that firstly, this category registers an **attitudinal** response rather than a behavioural one (both behavioural responses showed a decrease from Haddington); and secondly, turning to God could equally be an aspect of reinforcement or a signifier of change - a momentary reflection Godward or a concerted campaign to be more aspiring. Turning to factors which significantly affected these responses, as before there is a general absence of clear correlations. So far as the two numerically strong categories are concerned ('Turn to God' and 'Take life more seriously'), the former was linked to people watching out of general interest, and the latter to those seeking information and challenge. Neither commitment nor fragility appeared to affect the outcome in these two instances, and unfortunately, the other positive categories proved too small to permit analysis with any degree of confidence.

Q27 What do you think of the following statements on religious programmes

-

Table 45  
Statements Concerning Religious Programmes

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	D/K
Too many	2.2%	4.3%	58.7%	25.0%	9.8%
More controversial	3.3%	32.6%	37.0%	7.6%	19.6%
More Bible-based	36.3%	29.7%	20.9%	1.1%	12.1%
Less intellectual	4.3%	23.9%	54.3%	1.1%	16.3%
More entertaining	2.2%	43.5%	37.0%	9.8%	7.6%

Unlike Haddington, where the most popular statement was 'They should be more entertaining', here primacy was accorded to statement no. 3 - 'They should be more Bible-based'. Considering the sample characteristics, this is not an altogether surprising result, but in other respects the findings do follow those of the previous study, albeit with a generally lower level of enthusiasm. The one surprising feature is the number of people registering a strong disagreement over the first statement; considering the lack of interest overall, one might have expected a less obvious show of feeling. It transpired that highly-committed respondents were more likely to disagree (at least) with statements 1, 2 and 5, and to be wholeheartedly behind the suggestion of more Bible-based programmes, while the young (under 24) tended to agree that there are too many and (along with the next age-group) that they should be more entertaining - especially those in full-time work. As in Haddington, it was the males who favoured this latter suggestion in particular, whereas graduates preferred the prospect of more controversy and Biblical material.

#### **6.4.5 Conclusions**

Despite the considerable differences between samples, both in terms of age and sex distribution, and of church structure, the results overall do tend to reinforce each other as well as provide a certain support for the underlying hypothesis. Again we find that viewer-expectation is critical: given an assiduous and committed viewer, it seems likely that the level of gratification will be high - predominantly in the realms of reinforcing his/her existing world-view; if that predisposition is lacking, however, there is evidence to suggest that permanent attitudinal changes will not (or cannot?) occur. Clearly religious programmes do fulfill a function, or rather a series of functions, but these may not be the ones for which they were intended - that much would seem to depend in part, at least, on viewer-expectation.



## **6.5 Results - Mothers' Union**

### **6.5.1 Introduction**

In January 1988, during the course of an interview with Miss Monica Harris (Organising Secretary, Media Department), a suggestion was made that the Mothers' Union, with their strong interest in media matters, might like to become involved in the audience survey in some way. In due course, this was put to their Media Representatives and, as a result, 33 put their names forward as willing to take part<sup>1</sup>; the following analysis is based on the results of that participation, which resulted in a total of 305 forms being completed between the months of May and August 1988.

This section of the survey therefore differs from the previous two in several important respects:

firstly, the data was collected not from a spatially coherent sample, but from groups of Mothers' Union personnel scattered throughout England and Scotland;

secondly, the forms were primarily self-completed;

thirdly, the sample was biased heavily in terms of gender, age, religious conviction and socio-economic status;

and lastly, no attempt was made to compare profiles with Census returns, since this would have served no useful purpose in this instance.

Having said that, the results are still extremely valuable, since it is precisely these differences which make it possible to isolate significant trends common to all three samples, and to place greater confidence in any conclusions relating to them. Comparisons have been drawn with the findings from Haddington and Horsham, but only where it was felt that this would help clarify some assertion or hypothesis; it is hoped that this selective approach will avoid the danger of undue repetition, and throw more light on critical areas.

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<sup>1</sup>For a complete list of those taking part, see Appendix VI

6.5.2 Socio-Economic Characteristics [Q2 to Q7]

Q2. AGE, & Q3. SEX

In general, the sample was weighted heavily in favour of the older age groups, particularly the 60+ category, 62% being over the age of 45. Conversely, the number of respondents in the two youngest bands was significantly lower than in either of the two previous samples - 17% compared with 27% for Haddington and 46% for Horsham. This being the case, it was to be expected that other aspects of the population would also be biased, both in terms of socio-economic characteristics such as employment, status and so on, and in regard to viewing patterns; such expectations were indeed realised. The table below shows the overall age distribution broken down by gender:

Table 46  
Age by Sex

	Male	Female	Total
16-24	1.7%	6.2%	7.9%
25-34	1.7%	7.2%	8.9%
35-44	2.8%	18.3%	20.9%
45-59	4.5%	26.6%	30.8%
60+	1.4%	29.7%	31.5%
TOTAL	12.1%	87.9%	100.0%

The predominance of females is neither surprising nor significant, save insofar as the overall age-bias is more noticeable than in the equivalent male sample, but does have implications for subsequent analysis. In total, the women outnumber the men by some 7:1.

Q4. STATUS

Broadly speaking, the profile follows that of the previous samples, especially with respect to the number of 'married' respondents, the

Table 47  
Marital Status

	Married	Single	Widowed	Sep'd/Divorced
Male	65.7%	28.6%	2.9%	2.9%
Female	71.4%	10.9%	15.0%	2.6%

presence of 'single' females indicating that the survey was by no means restricted to MU members (as, of course, the inclusion of males implies). The single most important group, numerically as well as proportionately, was 'married females'.

**Q5. Have you ever been to college/university?**

Slightly less than half (43.4%) the respondents had gone beyond secondary education, the probability of them having done so being greatest in the age-band 25-34, and least among those aged over 60. Sex proved to be a significant factor in this instance, males being more likely than expected to answer in the affirmative, females less likely - albeit marginally.

**Q6. Are you -**

Table 48  
Employment

	Wkng F/T	Wkng P/T	Stdnt	Hsewife	Ret'd	Unempld
Male	71.4%	2.9%	5.7%	0.0%	17.1%	2.9%
Female	11.0%	23.9%	3.4%	39.0%	22.3%	0.4%

Numerically the largest single group, with 34.9% of the total, was 'housewife', those retired coming equal second with those in part-time employment (c.21% each). Amongst the male contingent, 'full-time work' appeared to be the most common status, although a larger proportion than that found previously were retired. With an overall unemployment rate of

0.7%, the sample quite clearly was not representative of national trends.

Q6. What is your job?

Table 49

SEG

	Male	Female	Total
SEG 1	14.2%	29.2%	43.4%
2	3.3%	45.0%	48.3%
3	3.3%	3.3%	6.6%
4	0.0%	0.8%	0.8%
5	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
6	0.8%	0.0%	0.8%
7	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

SEG's 1,2 and 3 accounted for 98% of all respondents, the vast majority of these being equally divided between groups 1 and 2; the slight numerical advantage of 'service' workers over those in 'managerial or professional' occupations contrasts with previous findings, approximating as it does more closely the situation obtaining in the UK generally, but there was again a marked under-representation of manual workers.

As a factor, SEG proved to be significant only in determining responses to six questions - most importantly, perhaps, Q11 (pertaining to religious upbringing) and Q18 (reasons for not watching religious programmes): those in SEG3 were less likely than expected to have attended church regularly as a child, and those in SEG1 more likely to think that the programmes were badly made. Neither of these correlations reinforced earlier findings however.

**6.5.3 Religious characteristics [Q8 to Q14]**

**Q8. What is your religion?**

With 99.3% of respondents answering 'Christian', the sample proved (not unexpectedly) to be almost devoid of either agnostics (0.3%), or atheists (0.3%), and totally so of members of other faiths. This bias is acceptable within the parameters of the present study since it has been shown above (s2.9.4) that the audience for religious TV programmes in any case consists almost entirely of people who are sympathetic to the Christian faith. What it does mean, however, is that there is a gap in the knowledge relating to how members of other faiths, for instance, perceive these programmes, and to fill this would require a separate data-gathering exercise. Unfortunately, such a study exceeds present resources.

**Q9. Are you a member of a church?**

Slightly fewer (91.1%) translated their religious conviction into church membership or, in the case of the Anglo-Catholic denominations, into the regular taking of communion - a comparable indicator for the purposes of the study, but this figure still proved to be higher than that found in either of the previous samples. Those over the age of 45 were significantly more likely than expected to be members, while those aged between 25 and 34 showed a marked tendency not to be so associated. As regards gender, it was the males who were more likely by a factor of 4:1 to answer the question in the negative, while females showed a slight but significant bias in favour of membership. The correlation with employment paralleled that found in the Haddington sample in all respects (see s6.3.2 above).

**Q10. How often do you go to services?**

The same factors of Age, Sex and Employment proved to be significant in determining frequency of attendance, and again there proved to be a close affinity with the results of the Scottish survey: the most regular

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attenders were likely to be female, aged 45 or over, and either retired or a housewife; conversely, those least likely to go to church every week were male, younger than 35, and working full-time. In overall terms, some 73% claimed to attend weekly (twice that found in Haddington but not as high as Horsham), 12% monthly, 14% less frequently and 0.7% not at all - the lowest figure out of the three samples.

### **Q11. As a child did you go to church regularly?**

The proportion of those responding in the affirmative (87%) was another point of similarity with Haddington, the likelihood of a positive response being greatest in the case of those over the age of 60 or widowed. Those in manual occupations were three times as likely to say 'No' as might be expected. To that extent, the present sample displayed evidence of an important social function associated with religious belief, namely the rearing of children in the traditions of the church, but one which has declined steadily since the last war. Such a function is significant insofar as it provides one indicator of faith-commitment, but as the Horsham sample showed, is insufficient in itself to account for the wider relevance of religious belief to contemporary society.

### **Q12. Do you regard yourself as a Christian?**

The consistently high level of positive response was maintained here: 98.7% of respondents answered in the affirmative, the probability of this being the case increasing slightly with age, and those most likely to reply 'No' being under 25 or between 35 and 44, male, and college-educated.

### **Q13. How often do you pray?**

The same number of respondents who attended church weekly (73%), prayed daily - in line with previous findings - the high level being closely related to that shown by the Horsham sample. Such people were most likely to be female, aged 45 or over, and retired or a housewife, in contrast to

those never praying who tended to be males under 35 in full-time employment - the same characteristics as those praying only occasionally.

Q14. How would you describe the importance of your faith to you?

Table 50  
Statements of Faith

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	D/K
Affects whole life	52.7%	35.6%	8.9%	0.3%	2.4%
Helps in crisis	49.4%	42.4%	4.3%	0.4%	3.5%
Makes no difference	0.0%	7.5%	33.3%	56.2%	3.0%
Haven't got any	0.0%	2.2%	26.6%	68.5%	2.7%

In most respects, the responses to this question constitute a middle ground between the two previous samples, and substantiate earlier findings relating to aspects of religious behaviour patterns. The tendency for opinion to be polarised, found so clearly in Horsham, is not so obvious here, and yet the caution of the Haddington sample (expressed as it was in lack of extreme views) is also missing. What we have instead is a restrained confidence in the personal importance of faith, most commonly associated with the female gender and increasing age, the obverse applying to younger males - especially those in full-time employment.

#### 6.5.3.1 Commitment

As before, respondents were reclassified in terms of commitment (or lack of) in preference to analysing the data using individual factors relating to faith: the results in this case revealed that 42.3% of respondents could be regarded as 'highly committed', 2.7% as 'high non-faith', and the remaining 54.9% as a control group. The level of commitment tended to follow that displayed by the Horsham sample, despite the fact that in other respects the profile came into closer approximation with Haddington - indeed, the number of significant correlations in which 'commitment'

featured (27), almost matched the number in that town. However, here, both Age and Sex appeared to influence the level of commitment, and this marks a departure from both previous samples: those displaying a high level were more likely to be over 45 and female; those showing a low propensity in that direction, under 24 and male; and those having no firm views one way or the other, aged 45 or less and male - albeit only marginally so.

### **6.5.3.2 Fragility**

Those who could be described (within the limited definition of the present study) as 'fragile', amounted to some 9.2% of the total sample, in contrast to the 32.6% 'self sufficient' and 58.2% unclassified. Their religious behaviour patterns seem to be remarkably consistent with those found earlier - weekly attendance at church, some sort of devotional upbringing, regular (daily) prayer, and frequent viewing of religious programmes. They are also more likely to be female, and non-graduates. Despite testing for a second category of fragility - the unemployed married man - none of the cases matched the criteria, so any conclusions drawn in relation to the data will be limited to the original definition.

### **6.5.4 Viewing Characteristics [Q15 to Q27]**

**Q15 How often do you watch TV?**

Table 51  
Frequency of Viewing

		Male	Female	All
<1hr	per day	11.5%	14.3%	13.9%
1-3hrs	"	71.4%	64.2%	64.9%
3-6hrs	"	14.3%	19.6%	19.2%
>6hrs	"	2.9%	1.9%	2.0%

In general terms, the sample repeated trends already identified, the



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majority of respondents viewing between 1 and 3 hours per day, and females consuming slightly more overall than their male counterparts. Within that broadly compatable framework, however, some minor discrepancies merit closer attention. In the first place, it is the men who apparently comprise the heaviest watchers, unlike either of the earlier samples where women clearly dominate; secondly, the proportion watching for more than 6 hours per day is lower; and thirdly, females outnumber males in the first category (<1 hour per day). Those watching least were likely to be aged between 25 and 45, married, university or college educated, and working part-time - self-sufficient in fact; those watching most, on the other hand, included more than the expected number of people over the age of 45, especially if they were separated/widowed or divorced.

Q16 When you watch, are you usually -

Table 52  
Social Context of Viewing

	Male	Female	All
Alone	31.4%	24.1%	24.7%
With family	62.9%	73.7%	72.6%
With friends	5.7%	2.3%	2.7%

Predictably, it was the older viewers (60+) who were most likely to watch alone - especially the widowed, who were over-represented by a factor of almost 4:1, along with those working in professional or managerial occupations, while the younger ones (16-24) did so in the company of friends; for the large majority, though, the normal context for viewing was the family. Hence, as far as the 'fragile' are concerned, watching television may well be significant as an antidote to solitude, and if so, then this should be reflected in the expectations they bring to their viewing habits (see below, Q22)

**Q17 Do you watch religious programmes -**

As before, frequency was significantly affected by the age and sex of the viewer, together with education, employment status, degree of commitment, and fragility: those watching every week were more likely to be 60+, female, non-graduate, retired, highly committed and fragile; those least likely to watch regularly were under 35, male, graduates, working full-time (ie. self-sufficient) and high non-faith.

Table 53  
Frequency of Viewing Religious Programmes

	Male	Female	All
Weekly	22.9%	41.4%	39.3%
Monthly	22.9%	29.3%	28.5%
Less often	34.3%	26.6%	27.5%
Never	20.0%	2.7%	4.7%

Overall, the largest response category was 'Weekly' with almost 40% of the total, but distribution was relatively even compared with previous findings - except for 'Never' with 4.7%. Amongst the men, there was a marked tendency to watch infrequently, whereas more than half (61%) the fragile group (dominated by women) watched on a weekly basis.

**Q18 Why not?**

Respondents were quite clear in their minds that religious programmes did not cause embarrassment, use strange language, or suffer from bad production; in fact the only major criticism offered was that they tended to be screened at an inconvenient time. Of those in agreement that they were dull, most were under 35, male, and self-sufficient; those not interested - young, female and self-sufficient; and at the wrong time - highly committed and fragile.

Table 54  
Reasons for Non-Viewing

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	D/K
Dull	7.2%	27.8%	45.4%	12.4%	7.2%
Wrong time	16.5%	50.4%	20.0%	6.1%	7.0%
Embarrassed	0.0%	1.1%	41.4%	54.0%	3.4%
Strange language	0.0%	6.7%	48.9%	42.2%	2.2%
Not interested	3.2%	18.9%	52.6%	24.2%	1.1%
Badly made	0.0%	14.6%	50.0%	22.0%	13.4%
Other [4.3%]					

Other reasons given more than once include:-

- Rest of family not interested
- Insufficient variety
- They aren't really interesting
- No time.

#### Q19 Can you name any?

There emerged no obvious factor which might cause a person to name a particular programme, a finding consistent with the earlier samples, the majority of respondents being able to name at least two. In first place, 'Songs of Praise' clearly dominated the selection process with 67.6% of the votes, followed some way behind by 'Highway' (10.5%) and 'Everyman' (9.7%) - the only programmes polling more than 5%. The same three accounted for 75% of the votes for second place, 'Songs of Praise' slipping to third position, with 'Praise Be!' the only other to receive more than 5%. Of the 120 people who managed to name three, 15.7% chose 'Highway', 12.2% 'Songs of Praise', 11.3% 'The Rock Gospel Show', 9.6% a 'Daily Service', 7.8% equally 'Epilogue', 'Everyman' and 'Heart of the Matter', and 7% 'This is the Day'; all others polled less than 5% of the votes each.

Clearly, then, two programmes between them continue to be identified in

particular with the genre of religious broadcasting, although this sample did differ to the extent that 'Everyman' appeared to be almost as well-known as 'Highway', and equally clearly, few people had time for breakfast television or broadcast services.

**Q20 When did you last watch the following programmes?**

Table 55  
Programmes Last Watched

	<1wk	<1mth	Longer	Never
Songs of Praise	39.3%	35.3%	22.8%	2.1%
Highway	12.5%	27.3%	26.6%	33.2%
Everyman/Heart of Matter	19.3%	26.4%	26.0%	28.0%
Epilogue/Late Call*	3.9%	1.3%	16.2%	78.6%
Rock Gospel Show	1.3%	5.3%	29.1%	64.3%
Articles of Faith	1.3%	4.8%	11.4%	82.5%
Fables, Parables & Miracles	0.0%	2.7%	8.8%	88.5%
This is the Day	1.3%	5.7%	20.3%	72.7%
Sunday View	0.0%	2.2%	4.5%	93.3%
High Spirits*	0.0%	0.9%	3.1%	96.0%

\* Screened only in Scotland

With 98% penetration, 'Songs of Praise' was also the only programme to be watched by more than half the respondents within the previous month, contrasting strongly with seven of those listed which failed to attract the large majority of viewers at all. Age proved to be a significant factor in the first eight programmes, those over 60 being more likely than expected to watch frequently in each case, females showing a greater tendency to view nos. 1, 3, 5 and 6, non-graduates 1, 2, 4 and 6, and those retired the same. 'Everyman' and 'This is the Day' were particularly attractive to the highly committed section of the sample, the latter also drawing in more 'fragile' people than expected along with 'Articles of Faith' which seemed to have a rather limited (sporadic) impact.

Q21 For those you watched less than a week ago, can you remember what they were about?

74.1% affirmed that they could indeed recall the content of these programmes, the likelihood being that they would also display a high level of commitment. This represented a larger proportion than that found in the previous samples, but not significantly so.

Q22 Why did you watch them? Was it for -

Table 56  
Reasons for Viewing

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	D/K
Company	1.0%	16.2%	54.5%	23.0%	5.2%
Guidance	4.5%	32.8%	47.8%	9.5%	5.5%
Entertainment	6.8%	54.6%	28.3%	6.8%	3.4%
Information	14.6%	54.0%	23.9%	5.2%	2.3%
General Interest	20.6%	73.4%	3.6%	1.6%	0.8%
Challenge	2.7%	18.7%	57.2%	12.8%	8.6%
Other [15.8%]					

The same reasons for watching religious programmes as before were cited here in the same order of popularity, even to the extent that 'company' came last despite the considerable number of respondents defined as 'fragile' who might be expected to regard television watching as a substitute for inter-personal contact. In the event, these did show a tendency to be more likely to give this reason, irrespective of age or gender. The number seeking guidance, however, was more in line with Haddington than Horsham, reflecting perhaps a similarity of church structure, and along with the 21.4% who were looking to be challenged, points to a potentially receptive audience, at least among the committed housewives - especially those over 45 and retired. On the other hand, entertainment appeared to transcend all factors apart from education,

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where non-graduates were over-represented while overall, it was the committed, fragile people who tended to express the strongest opinions.

Othe reasons cited more than once were:-

1. Worship (x8)
2. Substitute for going to church (x4)
3. Nothing else to do
4. Participation
5. Happened to be on (x3)
6. Family watching
7. Comfort
8. Fellowship (x2).

Five of these could be regarded as 'positive' in the sense that the respondent clearly hoped to derive something from the viewing experience, and the remaining three 'negative' insofar as the decision to watch was largely a passive one.

**Q23 When you watch them, do you -**

Table 57  
Viewer Participation

	Always	Usually	Some- times	Never	D/K
Watch closely	19.3%	44.0%	29.2%	7.4%	0.0%
Join in	20.4%	29.4%	34.1%	15.7%	0.4%
Watch, but not all time	5.2%	31.3%	48.3%	14.7%	0.5%
Get on with other thing	4.2%	15.5%	52.6%	27.2%	0.5%

The extent to which people joined in on a regular basis (50%) was up on either of the two previous polls, as was the tendency to do something else at the same time (20%), while the number watching closely (63%) fell between the two. The factors affecting this pattern were, however, broadly the same: those taking the greatest active interest tended to be over 60, committed, and 'fragile'; those watching 'some of the time' were more likely to be working; and those 'getting on with other things' - female, aged

between 35 and 44, and also in work.

**Q24 When religious programmes are on, do you -**

Table 58

Viewer Intention

	Always	Usually	Some- times	Never	D/K
Turn on specifically	21.9%	38.9%	26.3%	12.2%	0.7%
Watch if on	5.0%	28.4%	47.7%	17.9%	0.9%
Look to see what else is on	3.9%	11.3%	43.3%	39.9%	1.5%
Leave set on but don't watch	0.5%	4.0%	20.0%	74.5%	1.0%

With slightly more than 60% of respondents regularly turning on to watch a religious programme, and 75% claiming that they never get on with other things at the same time, the present sample shows a higher propensity than either of the previous ones towards intentional viewing. This is further evidenced by the tendency for people to evaluate alternative choices only occasionally, with a mere 3.9% habitually doing so whenever a religious programme comes on. In line with earlier findings, those most likely to turn on specifically are the over-60's, especially the women, and those who are highly committed and 'fragile'; in addition, significant correlations were found with Education (non-graduates being over-represented) and Employment (similarly, the retired). On the other hand, those frequently checking alternatives were more likely to be under 24, male, working full-time, or a student.

**Q25 Which of the following statements describe the way you feel at the end of the programmes -**

For the first time, more than 50% of those interviewed claimed to regularly come away from the viewing experience with a particular need satisfied - of those watching, 53.5% either 'usually' or 'always' felt that their religious beliefs had been confirmed by the programme. As before,

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though, a significant minority usually - at least - felt 'cheered up' (43.7%), or 'better informed' (43.2%), a finding closer to the Haddington sample than Horsham, and once again most people were never depressed or uncertain.

Factors influencing this pattern include Age - those experiencing something positive most often being twice as likely to be over 60 as not, Sex - females generally responding more readily than their male counterparts (especially if widowed or retired), Education - non-graduates being over-represented in this group, and Commitment - those already highly committed experiencing the greatest benefits.

Table 59  
Viewer Response

	Always	Usually	Some- times	Never	D/K
1.Sense of belonging	15.2%	23.4%	37.7%	18.2%	5.6%
2.More certain	8.2%	16.9%	43.5%	23.7%	7.7%
3.Cheered up	13.7%	30.0%	44.1%	7.9%	4.4%
4.Better informed	9.7%	33.5%	42.8%	11.0%	3.0%
5.Inspired	7.0%	13.6%	53.3%	21.0%	5.1%
6.Depressed	0.0%	0.5%	29.2%	66.8%	3.5%
7.Uncertain of my faith	1.0%	2.5%	14.0%	77.5%	5.0%
8.Confirmed...	16.9%	36.6%	30.0%	11.3%	5.2%
Other	[9.5%]				

In line with the high level of expectation and commitment displayed in the sample, there was a clear relationship between needs and fulfillments, summarised in the table below. What is interesting is that those viewers hoping to be guided or challenged were not only more likely to have these particular needs met than not, but showed a greater propensity for having other needs met as well: a positive correlation was found in the case of all positive feelings, and a negative one with 'depressed' and 'uncertain'.



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Table 60  
Intentions & Responses Compared

	Sense of Belonging	More Certain	Cheered up	Better Informed	Inspired	Depressed	Uncertain	Confirmed
Company	/	/	/					
Guidance	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Entertainment				/				/
Information	/	/	/	/	/	/		/
Interest	/	/		/	/			/
Challenge	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

[/ indicates significant relationship]

The only groups not to experience a wide range of benefits were those looking for company and entertainment, but even here, their basic needs were met - further evidence of a highly motivated audience. Indeed, as before, those regularly watching closely and turning on just to see the programmes showed the greatest probability of extracting something useful from them.

Other reactions described by respondents on more than one occasion were - being 'encouraged', 'irritated', 'grateful', 'joyful', 'disappointed', and left with 'nothing'.

Q26 Has watching a religious programme ever made you -

Table 61  
Viewer Effects

	Yes	No	D/K
Go to church more often	4.2%	94.7%	1.1%
Go to church less often	1.3%	98.3%	0.4%
Turn to God	27.2%	67.9%	4.9%
Turn away from God	0.0%	99.6%	0.4%
Change the way you live your life	11.2%	84.2%	4.6%
Take life more seriously	34.3%	61.0%	4.8%

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Higher positive responses over previous results were found in two cases, one behavioural and one attitudinal - 11.2% claimed a change in lifestyle as a result of watching a religious programme, and 34.3% a more serious outlook. Considering the way in which many of the respondents clearly approached their viewing, (ie. with a high degree of close, committed interest), this is not an altogether unexpected finding, but the relatively large number who altered their behaviour in some way does warrant further investigation. What would have been helpful here, is a documentary note concerning the nature of the change but, unfortunately, this lay outwith the scope of the present project. Such detailed information requires individual follow-up which, while extremely interesting, would have proved too demanding given existing resources.

As regards significant factors, the only socio-economic variable to feature at all was Sex, and that only in one instance - of those turning to God where females were represented more than might be expected. However, in this effect as well as the last two, Commitment did appear to be correlated, with those already disposed to a high degree of involvement being most likely to undergo a reinforcing experience, whereas Fragility showed no such tendency.

It appears that an increase in church attendance was linked to a desire for guidance, information, and challenge; a turning to God with the same, plus need for 'company'; a change in life, with 'company' and 'guidance'; and taking life more seriously, the same. In other words, those looking for specific help in resolving life-issues, and expecting to find it in the programmes watched, derived what they wanted and responded accordingly - in particular, those who 'watched closely', 'joined in', and turned on specifically, were more likely than expected to do this.

When it comes to programmes watched, those who recently saw 'Songs of Praise' showed a greater probability of going to church more often, turning to God (also associated with 'This is the Day'), and taking life more seriously (together with 'Articles of Faith', and 'Everyman' among others). The only one to be correlated to a change in lifestyle, however, was 'The Rock Gospel Show': of the 24 people who said they had been influenced in this way, 15 had watched the programme at some stage - twice as many as expected.

Q27 What do you think of the following statements on religious programmes:

Table 62  
Statements Concerning Religious Programmes

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	D/K
Too many	0.4%	1.5%	66.2%	23.0%	8.9%
More controversial	3.2%	30.8%	45.5%	5.9%	14.6%
More Bible-based	9.7%	38.0%	32.6%	2.7%	17.1%
Less intellectual	2.4%	20.7%	56.5%	7.3%	13.0%
More entertaining	6.3%	38.6%	39.4%	6.3%	11.8%

The only statement with which the majority of those expressing an opinion agreed, was that programmes should be 'more Bible-based', and even here the proportion of total respondents was less than half - 47.7%. Almost as many (44.9%) expressed an opinion that they should be more entertaining, while all the other statements were rejected by more than half those polled. The greatest show of feeling was in connection with the first proposition, namely that there were too many religious programmes on television already, where 23% strongly disagreed, and only 1.9% agreed in any way.

Those who were working at least part-time tended to want a more controversial element to be incorporated in the schedules, those over 35 that they should lessen their intellectual demands, and the non-graduates - a greater amount of entertainment; neither Commitment, nor Fragility, proved to be significant in this respect.

#### **6.5.5 Conclusions**

In many ways, the present sample represents a middle-ground between the extremes of the previous case-studies, both in terms of context and content. The high level of commitment, for instance, so characteristic of Horsham, is here balanced by a somewhat looser congregational structure; and the views expressed by respondents tended to be more cautious. However, the overwhelming impression remains, that the primary effect of religious programmes is to reinforce existing belief structures, and to that extent, the results confirm earlier (tentative) suggestions that they significantly fail to challenge. The next section attempts to draw these rather fragmented aspects together for the survey as a whole.

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**6.6 Overall Conclusions**

**6.6.1 Profile Characteristics**

Altogether, 611 forms were processed during the course of the survey, and the following profile summarises their main characteristics:

Table 63  
All Samples; Profile

AGE.	16-24	11.8%	
	25-34	14.1%	
	35-44	22.4%	
	45-59	26.3%	
	60+	25.4%	
SEX.	Male	23.5%	
	Female	76.5%	
STATUS.	Married	68.0%	
	Single	18.0%	
	Sep'd/Div'd.	2.8%	
	Widowed	11.1%	
EDUCATION.	Yes	51.6%	[ie, attended college or university]
	No	48.4%	
EMPLOYMENT	Working F/T	30.9%	
	" P/T	19.8%	
	Student	4.3%	
	Housewife	24.8%	
	Retired	18.8%	
	Unemployed	1.5%	

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SEG 1	Manag/Profess.	48.7%
2	Service	37.7%
3	Manual	9.1%
4	Self-empl'd.	3.6%
5	Agriculture	0.6%
6	Forces	0.3%
RELIGION	Christian	98.4%
	Agnostic	1.5%
	None	0.2%
MEMBER	Yes	84.6%
	No	15.4%
COMMITMENT	High	24.5%
	High non-faith	4.7%
	Rest	70.7%
FRAGILITY	High	7.7%
	Self-suffic.	39.4%
	Rest	49.1%

The sample overall was quite clearly biased in several ways: firstly, it was female-dominated; secondly, it was almost exclusively Christian; thirdly, it was essentially professional middle-class; and fourthly, it contained a disproportionate number of highly-committed people. Conversely, it lacked representatives of other faiths, the disadvantaged, and those professing no religious conviction whatsoever. Within the context of the present study, these limitations were acceptable, but they need to be stated nevertheless.

#### **6.6.2 Significant Factors**

Of those factors listed above, six proved to be significantly correlated in some way in all three major samples when analysed individually - Age

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(x21), Sex (x3), Education (x2), Employment (x4), Commitment (x5), and Fragility (x9). However, despite a large number of statistically significant relationships both here, and in the way watching religious programmes was related to the intentionality of that viewing and feelings at the end, no light was shed on the mechanisms whereby effects were produced. Various indicators showed up in individual samples, and in the data when taken as a whole, but none repeated themselves over the three tests. Clearly this is an area where further work is needed.

Since the role of Age and Gender in religious viewing are relatively well documented, and since the results of the current analysis do not contradict those findings in any major sense, attention here is focussed on the part played by Commitment and Fragility as defined for the purposes of the present study. Taking the data as a whole, the former was found to be significant in 34 instances, and the latter, 9 - in contrast to the figures given above. They affected the whole area of viewing, from social context, through expectations, to feelings derived, and their significance should not be under-rated.

The length of time people spent watching television in general varied in accordance with their strength of commitment: for instance, those showing a high degree were much more likely than expected to see only one hour per day or less, and be under-represented (by a factor of 6:1) among those watching more than six hours; in contrast, those described as 'high non-faith' were three times more likely to spend over this time watching television. In terms of context, 'fragile' people (almost by definition) invariably watched alone, but so did a considerable number of 'committed' viewers - significantly more than expected in fact. When it came to the frequency with which religious programmes were watched, the people who did so every week were the ones who were neither highly-committed nor high non-faith - 'the rest', especially the 'fragile' ones.

Reasons for not watching religious programmes, either at all or as frequently as might be expected, showed a correlation with 'commitment' in a number of cases: for instance, those regarding them as dull were six times more likely than expected to be categorised as 'high non-faith', whereas 'wrong timing' was cited twice as often as predicted by 'committed' respondents, the same group strongly disagreeing with the suggestion that

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the programmes use strange language or are badly made. Similarly, programmes such as 'Everyman' and 'This is the Day' were named predominantly by this group, along with 'Songs of Praise', whereas 'Highway' seemed rather to be linked with 'the rest' and the 'self-sufficient'. However, when it came to asking about frequency of viewing such programmes (Q.20), a slightly different picture emerged: 'Songs of Praise', 'Highway' and 'Epilogue' were seen most recently by people who were neither committed nor non-religious but Fragile; 'Everyman' drew twice as many 'committed' viewers as expected; and the rest attracted viewers from across the board.

The amount of attention paid by viewers could be gauged, in part at least, by their ability to recall details of content, and it appears from the statistics that Committed viewers could do so far better than others. This may in turn be due to the fact that this group were much more likely to be looking for a challenge and, conversely, less likely to be expecting entertainment, combined with a tendency to always watch closely and join in (along with the Fragile viewers), while the majority are more inclined to get on with other things - at least for some of the time. They were also in the habit of regularly turning on just to see a particular religious programme in contrast to the 'high non-faith' viewer who does his/her best to seek alternatives.

Significant relationships were also found between Commitment and a sense of belonging, greater certainty (shared with the Fragile), inspiration and confirmation, whereas the informational aspect of religious broadcasting seemed to be of most value to the Fragile. On the question of effects, however, as indicated above the relationships were not clear except in the case of 'turning to God' where Committed viewers were over-represented. Conversely, those categorised as 'high non-faith' were noticeable by their absence in this respect, only one such person claiming to have been caused to 'turn to God' or change their lifestyle, and only two 'take life more seriously' - less than one third of one per-cent of the total sample. (Comparative figures for Fragile viewers were 15%, 3% and 15%).

Of the statements put forward for comment, only one appeared to be significantly related to Commitment, and none to Fragility: those expressing a strong conviction that programmes should be more 'Bible-



based' were twice as likely to be Committed as expected, in contrast to the 'high non-faith' respondents who tended to register firm disapproval.

### **6.6.3 Noteworthy Trends**

#### **1. Who watches religious programmes?**

With only 40% of a church-based sample regularly (ie. weekly) watching religious programmes, it does appear that such output is of strictly limited appeal. The evidence points to a predominantly female, ageing audience comprising mostly non-graduates, (much in line with previous research findings), but by no means exclusively so. While commitment does affect the probability of someone being a frequent viewer, the relationship is a complex one, affected as it is by the socio-religious context of the viewer. If, for instance, they are part of a highly integrated congregational structure which supplies them with most of their emotional/spiritual requirements, the possibility of their commitment leading to a high level of consumption of religious television appears to be modified downwards; if, on the other hand, their commitment is worked out in the context of a much looser network of relationships, it may well be that these programmes are used to supplement religious experience; in either case, there is little to suggest that such programmes tempt the committed viewer away from his/her church ties. Equally, the possibility of successfully drawing in the 'high non-faith' viewer on a regular basis appears to be a remote one.

#### **2. Why do they watch them?**

Interestingly enough, one reason **not** given by the majority of respondents was 'company': despite the fact that a considerable number of viewers (23%) watch television on their own, and the findings of the IBA (1970) which suggested that there might be a link between isolation and watching religious programmes, the present study does not bear out such a hypothesis. Most (93%) watch out of general interest, in order to gain information (67.7%), or be entertained (61.3%), with much smaller percentages looking for guidance (33.2%) or challenge (20.9%).

### **3. What do they get out of them?**

As suggested above (Tables 23, 44, 61), the extent to which people are affected by the programmes they watch seems to vary in accordance with the level of attention they pay towards them, the needs they bring with them, and the degree of intentionality which characterises their viewing patterns. It is those who always watch closely (22.4%), join in (15.3%), turn on specifically to watch a particular programme (22.8%) and know what they are looking for, who generally come away from the experience with a sense of fulfillment. The most common such feelings were of confirmation (48.2% either 'usually' or 'always'), being cheered up (42.2%), and informed (37%), the number of people regularly experiencing depression or uncertainty being less than one per-cent in either case.

#### ***6.6.4 Challenge or Reinforcement?***

If Hughes' hypothesis were true, we would expect to find a marked lack of evidence relating to viewers who had been fundamentally challenged with respect to their life-values, and a preponderance relating to those whose opinions and beliefs were substantiated as a result of watching religious programmes. Information was gathered under a number of headings in an attempt to isolate this area of interaction, behavioural as well as attitudinal, and the following picture emerged.

4.1% of all respondents claimed that they had, at some time, been caused to attend church more frequently as a direct result of seeing a programme, compared to 1% who had reduced their level of attendance - a small but not unimportant proportion of the whole. Another index, which included both behavioural and attitudinal components (at least in principle), namely whether or not a change in lifestyle had ever been initiated, gave a slightly higher response of 8.9%. Now, it is possible that someone might be able to say they have changed the way they live their life without it being evidenced in their actions, but it is more probable that these respondents genuinely had, in some way, modified their behaviour. What cannot be tested, unfortunately, is the precise nature of those changes: if they consisted of actions which diverged significantly from socially accepted standards or, indeed, ran counter to principles inherent in the

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dominant world-view, then this would count as evidence against the hypothesis; if, however, they brought the respondent into closer conformity with the prevailing ethos, the hypothesis would tend to be confirmed. On a different level, we also have the question of personal conflict-resolution: the individual might be integrated into whatever social structures are deemed relevant, but at the expense of sacrificing certain values. If a programme lays sufficient stress on those values, the critical issue then becomes one of trading off their importance against that of maintaining social acceptability or credibility. As Horsfield (1984) says,

*The likelihood of a given person's behaving in conformity with a given 'act' is a function of three factors: 'salience', the degree to which the particular behaviour exists psychologically for the person; 'repertoire', the summed salience of all possible acts for the person in his present situation,...; 'arousal', which is the extent to which a person is activated to perform any act in his present situation. (op cit., p128)*

Alternatively, this can be presented as a mathematical formula:-

$$\text{ACT} = \text{SALIENCE} / \text{REPERTOIRE} * \text{AROUSAL}.$$

In terms of religious broadcasting, Horsfield continues, we might predict that the effects will be greatest when the viewer brings a specific need to his/her viewing, the programme endorses a line of action made more attractive by the limited repertoire available and its possibility of providing fulfilment, and when the viewer has previously experienced 'favourable consequences' previously. Fitting the data to this model, we see that this does indeed seem to be the case. It is those people who express a strong desire to be challenged or guided who show the greatest propensity for change, and it is these same people who already possess a high degree of commitment generally speaking. The evidence points overwhelmingly to a process of reinforcement taking place, especially since the most commonly held impression by viewers is that of confirmation [see section 6.6.3 above].

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'Interestingly, corroborating evidence is contained in Hoover (1988) where it was found that, of those interviewed in the course of the study, only one viewer of '700 Club' claimed to have been converted through watching the programme, and he came from an expressly religious background (ibid., p175).

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Notwithstanding the above, it should also be noted that 27.3% of respondents said they had been caused to 'turn to God', and 29.1% to 'take life more seriously'. These are primarily attitudinal indicators, although a behavioural component is not to be ruled out, and compare favourably with the figure of 34.3% 'highly-committed'. Neither effect **necessarily** involves a fundamental change in belief structures, however, since 'turning to God' could equally be associated with a desire to express thankfulness, and a more serious outlook on life the result of bringing existing concerns into focus. Indeed, other research (eg. Berelson and Steiner, cited in Horsfield (1984)) suggests that the viewer brings a whole array of defense mechanisms to his/her viewing, specifically aimed at protecting the individual against challenge. Thus, material is carefully selected and filtered, messages may be misread, and group pressure used to reinforce existing predispositions (ibid., p132). If this is the case, and the rest of the findings would appear to lend credence to such a hypothesis, then the proper course of action would seem to be to regard these figures as evidence, not so much of 'challenge', as of modifying people's attitudes towards a faith they already hold certain views on. Certainly, more research is needed into the precise nature of these alleged changes, but as far as can be ascertained at present, Hughes' hypothesis does present us with one way at least of explaining the empirical data to hand.

# Chapter Seven

## CONTENT ANALYSIS



## **7.1 Purpose**

Any consideration of the phenomenon of religious broadcasting would be incomplete without more than a passing reference to the programmes themselves. Some, such as Songs of Praise, have remained broadly similar in structure and content for more than a decade; others are relatively short-lived or experimental in their approach - The Rock Gospel Show, for instance. In either case, the title alone conveys information only to those familiar with that particular programme, and in order to give a more meaningful description of them, some sort of analysis is necessary. The following attempt is an intentionally piecemeal one, designed to elucidate certain outstanding features as opposed to describing the whole phenomenon at length, rather in the way one might offer someone a series of snapshots of a locality in order to convey something of its flavour, in preference to supplying them with a full-length documentary: the latter might well be a more comprehensive approach, but it runs the risk of obscuring important details in a plethora of information.

## **7.2 Methodology**

Five programmes were chosen from those screened in the weeks commencing 29th November and 5th December 1987 to represent the broad spectrum of religious broadcasting in the UK. They were as follows:-

Late Call	{STV}	c.10.30pm, Mon-Fri
Songs of Praise	{BBC}	6.40pm, Sun
Highway	{STV}	6.30pm, Sun
This is the Day	{BBC}	10.30am, Sun
Articles of Faith	{BBC}	10.00am, Sun

These were recorded on video-tape for subsequent analysis, and elements of them are reproduced in the chapter below. In the case of Late Call and Articles of Faith, a full transcript has been made, because the whole thrust of the programme was verbal; elsewhere, the process has been more selective and greater attention paid to the 'dialogue' between word and image. Wherever possible, digitised images (taken direct from the video

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screen) have been included in the text to illustrate salient points.

A semiotic approach was used in the analysis, loosely based on the work of Barthes (1973), and following the precepts outlined in Fiske and Hartley (1978). Since the field of semiotics is a relatively new one, and subject to change, the principles adopted have been kept as straightforward as possible, bearing in mind the overall objective of 'reading the text' as opposed to merely describing it. Nevertheless, the use of certain key terms is unavoidable and, before proceeding further, a short Glossary is presented as a preface to the analysis itself.

### **7.3 G l o s s a r y o f K e y T e r m s**

<b>SIGN</b>	Comprises two components : <b>Signifier</b> and <b>Signified</b> <b>Signifier</b> A physical object, ie. word/sound/image <b>Signified</b> A mental concept associated with the above
<b>MOTIVATION</b>	Degree to which the Signified controls our interpretation of the <b>Signifier</b>
<b>CONVENTION</b>	Socially determined set of rules governing the interpretative process
<i>[Motivation and Convention increase or decrease with respect to a particular sign in direct and opposite proportion to each other,]</i>	
<b>ICONIC, MOTIVATED SIGN</b> is only lightly conventionalised - ie. the Signified exerts a controlling influence (eg. photograph)	
<b>ARBITRARY, UNMOTIVATED SIGN</b> relies on convention alone to carry its meaning (eg. traffic sign)	
<b>SIGNIFICATION</b>	Level of meaning, of which three are commonly referred to:- <b>FIRST</b> - Self-contained, ie. the sign means that which is signified <b>SECOND</b> - Cultural, ie. meaning is derived from cultural values <b>THIRD</b> - World-view, ie. lower level meanings cohere to give comprehensive picture of social world

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SECOND ORDER signs comprise:-

**MYTHS** in which the first order sign itself becomes a signifier of cultural values

**CONNOTATIVE** the subjective process whereby feelings and judgements are attributed to the signifier, as by the use of certain camera techniques, soundtrack, etc.

*[In the Third Order, the primary function of signs (to organize meaning) reaches its highest point in the creation of a MYTHOLOGY or Ideology,]*

**METAPHOR** an asserted, not natural, connection between signified and signifier

**METONYM** a contiguous relationship between the signified and signifier, ie. the part is taken to represent the whole

*[In First Order signs, both modes (metaphorical and metonymical) operate simultaneously; in the Second Order, Metaphor dominates,]*

**PARADIGM** 'vertical' set of units (ie. signs or words) appropriate to a particular situation

**SYNTAGM** 'horizontal' chain into which the paradigm is linked to make a whole.

[Based on Fiske and Hartley (1978), pp.37-67]

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## 7.4 Results

### 7.4.1 *Late Call* with Hamish Montgomery, 29th November 1987

00:00 Opening Credits - static shot of TV studios at night. STV logo dominates skyline. Windows illuminated to reveal offices within. Several cars parked in car park. [Accompanied by theme tune].

Fig. 4

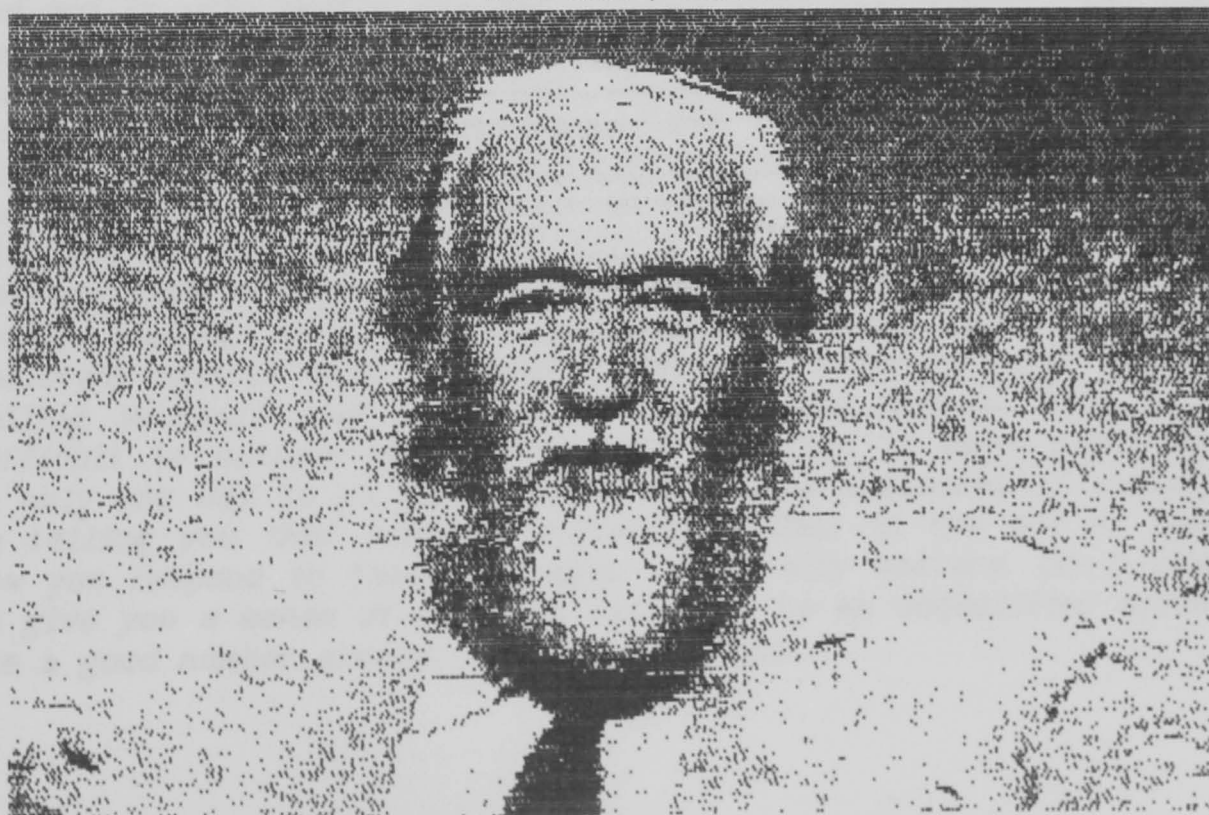
'Late Call'; Opening Credits



00:10 Cut to studio shot - head and shoulders of bearded man.

Fig. 5

'Late Call'; Studio Shot



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I want to speak tonight particularly to those who feel somehow unqualified for this life. On the one hand, our society seems to be expecting more of people in the way of 'O' grades and Highers and Certificates and Degrees; and on the other hand, it doesn't always provide us with ways to use all this learning. Indeed, I meet many people who, in the end of the day, feel that it has just added to their frustration. Interesting phrase that, "in the end of the day". In the end of this day, do you feel frustrated or - even worse - do you feel totally unqualified and at the foot of the pile? I remember visiting a school to talk to sixth year pupils about human relationships. The school was in a multiple-deprived area. Very few were going to get a job on leaving, let alone a chance to move into higher education. I was warned that the group I was going to meet had at least stayed to continue schooling, but that educationally it was the kind of group you don't speak to about 'maths' - you talk about 'sums'. The image was of a group of kids as thick as three short planks. Well, I am no authority on education, and maybe these youngsters didn't possess much academic potential, but I have seldom been with a group of young people who had such insight into what makes people tick. They had received their wider education in a very tough school - and they had learnt a lot - and yet statistically, 90% were going to be at the bottom of the pile and they knew it.

Out of a totally different environment, I know a young man of 20 who has exhausted all the government programmes he is entitled to use, including one on social care where he proved himself in caring for both elderly and mentally handicapped. A good lad - he loves working with people but he cannot get a job. You see, he has a difficulty in writing, being a bit dyslexic. Society is saying, "You are not qualified". I remember hearing a famous man say the only way that he would get into university would be from the top, because he hadn't the qualifications to get in at the bottom. He told the story as he became Chancellor.

If, tonight, you are feeling low and a bit despairing because the pressures of life seem to be making you feel useless and unqualified for living, try hard to hold onto a little bit of hope. Over 20 years ago, I was working at my drawing board when one of my sons, then about 6 years old, without saying anything put a little illustrated card in front of me. I think he had got it with bubble-gum and I recall also that I didn't get the bubble-gum. On the card was a drawing - a standard picture of an old-time convict: blue and white striped shirt, ball and chain, and sitting on a large rock holding a sledge-hammer. The words on the card read "You are never a complete failure - you can always serve as a bad example". It's tough to have a sense of humour in the midst of despair, but I share this with you because I have never felt a complete failure since reading that message from a 6-year old - 'You are never a complete failure'. Even if you're feeling very low tonight, maybe feeling that you are one of society's rejects with apparently little to offer of what is wanted, try telling yourself that you are not a complete failure. This is something difficult to believe when we're down, but then if we're right down, there is only one way to go, and that is up. If the pressures of society seem to be telling you that you are unqualified, then in the end of the day it's how you respond to those messages that really matters. Don't allow others to give you a sense of complete failure - be an unqualified success. There are a good number around. May God bless you.

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Now, while the content of *Late Call* is almost entirely verbal, consisting as it does of a monologue addressed directly at the camera (usually with a minimum of variation in facial expression), its primary significance, I would suggest, lies rather in its social function - evidenced in the opening credits and programme format. The iconic representation of Gateway Studios in the former contains several important signifiers: firstly, the building itself which is well-lit, connoting a sense of security, familiarity - predictability even, and is reinforced by the use of a soundtrack of soothing 'classical' music; next, the STV logo (a thistle), which dominates the skyline and locates the viewer firmly in a specific studio context; thirdly, the cars in the car park reassure the viewer that he/she is not alone in being up at that time of night; and finally the title, '*Late Call*', serves effectively as an identifier of all that is to follow. In one sense, what does follow is immaterial - the viewer has already received the signals which count, and the identity of the speaker, or the content of the message, are of secondary interest only.

Thus, at the first level of meaning, the opening shot signifies a warm, welcoming building; at the second (cultural) level, positive values of social cohesion are attributed to it, and the socio-centrality of the programme is attested to - the day is not going to end without someone speaking a few words of comfort, in spite of all that has gone before. The mythical world of television has been allowed (for the previous twelve hours or so) to entertain, shock, inform, and displace, but for the present at least, it is hauled back into a place of safety. In such a world, the function of religion is to both legitimate what has gone before, and desensitize it, leaving the viewer free to retire for the night knowing that whatever tomorrow brings, by the time 10.30pm comes around again, the caller from the studios will quietly but firmly restore equilibrium. This religion has little to do with dogma or tradition: rather, it is an attempt to rescue transcendence from extreme marginalisation and, at a secular level, to argue for the relevance of a contra-distinctives set of values.

Despite the 'untheological' nature of the message analysed (there being only one direct religious reference - the parting words "God bless"), and the equally secular context (studio setting, absence of clerical attire, etc.), the dominant paradigm is undoubtedly that of the pulpit. Reversing

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the usual pattern whereby television 'informs', 'educates' and 'entertains' without ever transgressing the unwritten but mutually adopted rules of impersonality, 'Late Call' blatantly adopts the methodology and techniques of the preacher, talking directly to the viewer, referring to them in the second person singular, and creating the impression of a one-to-one relationship with almost complete disregard for the medium itself. Interestingly enough, this highly personal approach, in its effort to encourage the individual struggling to make sense of a distant, unsympathetic societal world, replicates a trend found in other areas of televisual communication: Fiske and Hartley (op cit., p91), for instance, detect a tension between institutional and individual representation in such varied genres as the News and Drama - in both instances, myths dealing with secondary groups are in conflict with those appropriate to primary groups, and there is no resolution. Similarly, the contradictions are simply assumed here, and it is left up to the viewer to make sense of it.

#### 7.4.2 Songs of Praise

Another example of contradiction, this time between the vehicle of the message and its content, was found in the programme 'Songs of Praise'. The particular episode analysed, featured a traditional carol service - complete with candles and robed choristers - from King's College, Cambridge, but into this setting was inserted (rather uncomfortably) an interview with a Post-graduate student which seemed to challenge all the niceties associated with such pageantry. The conversation took place in his room, word-processor at hand, and was accompanied by film extracts of an unidentified shanty town:-

Fig. 6  
James Perry in his room



Interviewer: James Perry is a Post-graduate student who came up to Cambridge to read Law, but is now studying Theology as he prepares to be an Anglican priest. His change of course came about as a result of a visit to Latin America.

James Perry: When I was working in the shanty towns there, my attitude - my vision of God I suppose - and my attitude to life and death, changed fundamentally. There was no electricity, no water, no sanitation - all of these things in the worst of the remote parts of the towns. And there, where these people are faced with such appalling situations, you can see the presence of God shining out of people in a very real way.



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Int: How can you say you can see God shining out of people when they are so poor?

J.P: God loves **all** people of **all** creed, **all** colour, but he has a preferential love for the poor. The mother with two children, for example - if one of the children is sick, then she cares particularly for the child that is sick, not because she doesn't love the other child, but because that one needs her love more. If you were to look at John 1<sup>4</sup>, "the word became flesh and dwelt among us", in the Greek it says "the word became flesh and pitched his tent among us": in Peru that would be "the word became flesh and dwelt among us in a slum". And again, it says later - "Jesus Christ, though he was yet rich, for our sakes he became poor". These seem to be very practical ways in which God has involved himself in history on behalf of the poor.

Int: James, in this Advent service, when you'll be reading the lesson about people who walked in darkness seeing a great light, and you'll be lighting the Advent candle, who will you be thinking about - the people in great darkness?

J.P: I would say that they're the people who are marginalised in all societies - the people who suffer violence, oppression and so on. I mean, I think particularly from my experiences in South America: these will be the people I'm thinking of.

[The scene then reverts to the candle-lit chapel, with the same student - now attired in academic robes - reading the lesson prior to lighting the Advent candle.]

Fig. 7  
James Perry reading Lesson



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Here we have two very different mythologies, hard up against each other, the one with its connotated sense of religious tradition and the other with its clearly sounded criticism of all such complacency. The point of interest here is the way in which the one is allowed to embrace (and hence defuse) the other: when James Perry dons his finery and participates in the service, it is more than a mere outward conformity that is at stake - in so doing he is, albeit unwittingly, legitimating the form and function of the Church he is about to enter, in direct contrast to the very experience which caused him to train for its ministry. The challenge inherent in the Liberation Theology reference has been rendered harmless and ineffectual, not by any internal logical (or theological) inconsistency, but by the visual imperative inherent in the programme's syntagmic structure. *Songs of Praise* (and *Late Call*) is about conformity, and all content must necessarily be brought into harmony with that end.

The interview itself, conducted in the Student's quarters, has the effect of temporarily breaking the visual symmetry of the programme, and lends emphasis to the dramatic nature of the message: footage of the inhabitants of a (presumably) Latin American slum similarly reinforce the starkness of the alternative world described by James Perry. Such imagery is intrinsically disturbing, and in a documentary context might be expected to stimulate some sort of practical response - in the way that film of the Ethiopian famine spurred Bob Geldof into action, but here the vehicle mitigates against such a response. By involving the protagonist in the symbolic act of lighting the Advent candle, the producers ensure that further response is deemed unnecessary

#### **7.4.3 Highway**

'Highway', originally conceived as a successor to 'Stars on Sunday', and hence direct competitor to 'Songs of Praise', relies much more on secular metaphors - and much less on comfortable religious imagery - than its BBC counterpart. The opening credits set the tone for the programme which follows: stills and sequences of that week's host town following in quick succession on each other, culminating in a close-up of some particular street scene with the programme's title emblazoned across it. In this

episode, the view was of a shopping arcade which framed, at its far end, a church building recognisable only by its prominent spire, and this tendency to reduce the 'religious' element to a dimly-perceived icon in the distance carries over into the whole programme's format.

Fig. 8  
'Highway': Opening Credits



The underlying philosophy of 'Highway' is that most people's world view is highly secularised: in consequence, if they are to recognize something as 'religious', it must be clearly labelled as such. This is achieved by a variety of methods, iconographic as well as connotated - for instance, the programme in question contained two explicitly 'religious' items, and three passing references, in its running order. The first two, both songs, were clearly referenced in their titles - "I'll walk with God, from this day on" and "The Angel Gabriel" - and the second of these was reinforced by virtue of its setting which consisted of a school chapel occupied by robed choristers. Of the remaining three, one was an architectural remark - a reference to St. Mary Magdalen's tower, one a fleeting extract from a children's song "Jesus loves me" - sung by residents of the Albermarle rehabilitation centre during a visit by the host, and one a personal response to suffering which forcefully reminded the viewer of the cost of



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self-sacrifice. In this last case, the theological dimension was implied rather than explicit, the lack of signals indicating that the viewer was free to respond in a non-religious way to a problem which continues to defy theological resolution.

Fig. 9  
'The Wurzles'



Fig. 10  
School Choir singing 'Angel Gabriel'



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The complete running order was as follows:-

- 00        **Opening Credits**, leading into first song - sung by the programme's presenter, Harry Secombe: "I'll, walk with God...". Setting: riverside stroll.
- 03        **Introduction** to the town of Taunton by H.S., consisting of historical and geographical cameos.  
**Interview** with Deputy County Archivist, who regales the viewer with more circumstantial details on the local significance of wool and cider.
- 05        **Song**: "Take me back to good ol' Zomerzet [sic]", performed by The Wurzles in a local hotel.
- 08        **Interview** with Director of the Albermarle Centre for social rehabilitation - ("*all the churches in Taunton support it*").
- 10        **Song**: "The Angel Gabriel", sung by local school choir in full regalia.
- 12        Interview with Sandy Wilson (songwriter who composed lyrics for 'The Boyfriend') who lives locally, on why he likes Somerset.
- 14        **Song**: "I could be happy with you..." (taken from show).
- 16        **Interview** with Janet Dibley, a singer/actress, whose career started with her father who "*ran the Catholic youth club*"...
- 17        **Poem** read by actress Anne Way: extract from Wordsworth.
- 18        **Interview**: Trevor's wife died so that their latest baby could live..."*If you can't do any good out of tragedy, it's a poor thing*"...
- 22        **Song**: Harry Secombe sings an Aria from Tosca.
- 24        **Closing Credits**.

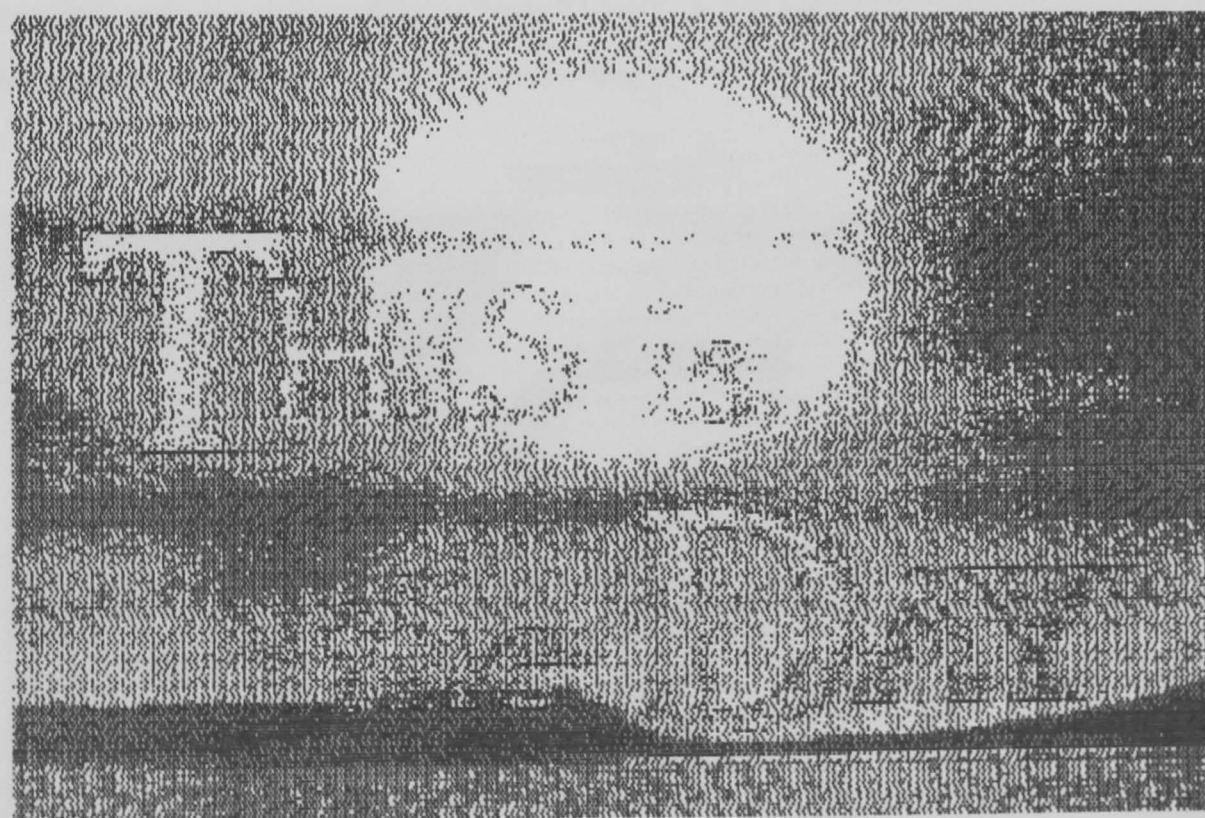
Approximately six of the programmes's 25 minutes were taken up with explicitly religious material, compared to 'Songs of Praise', for instance, where the content is almost exclusively Christian, highlighting the difference between the two different approaches. However, a feature common to both is the way in which the viewer is invited to participate: in the case of 'Highway', this is on the level of folk-religion and common interest; with 'Songs of Praise' it is rather an identification with a shared tradition and experience. This involvement is controlled by the

inclusion of certain images and metaphors, and the exclusion of others. We have already seen (s7.4.2 above) how potentially damaging conflicts are avoided by clawing disparate elements back into conformity with the programme's aspirations; even more importantly, perhaps, is the knowledge on the part of the viewer that they can enter into dialogue with the programme entirely on their own terms, with no risk of being asked to go further than they are willing. This process is carried forward even further in the case of the next programme, to which we now turn.

#### *7.4.4 'This is the Day'*

With 'This is the Day', the BBC have attempted to create an intimate, caring atmosphere in which the viewers participate and help to sustain. The overtly Christian flavour is attested to in the opening sequence which moves swiftly from a highly-motivated sunrise scene embellished with the programme's title...

Fig. 11  
'This is the Day'; Opening Credits (1)



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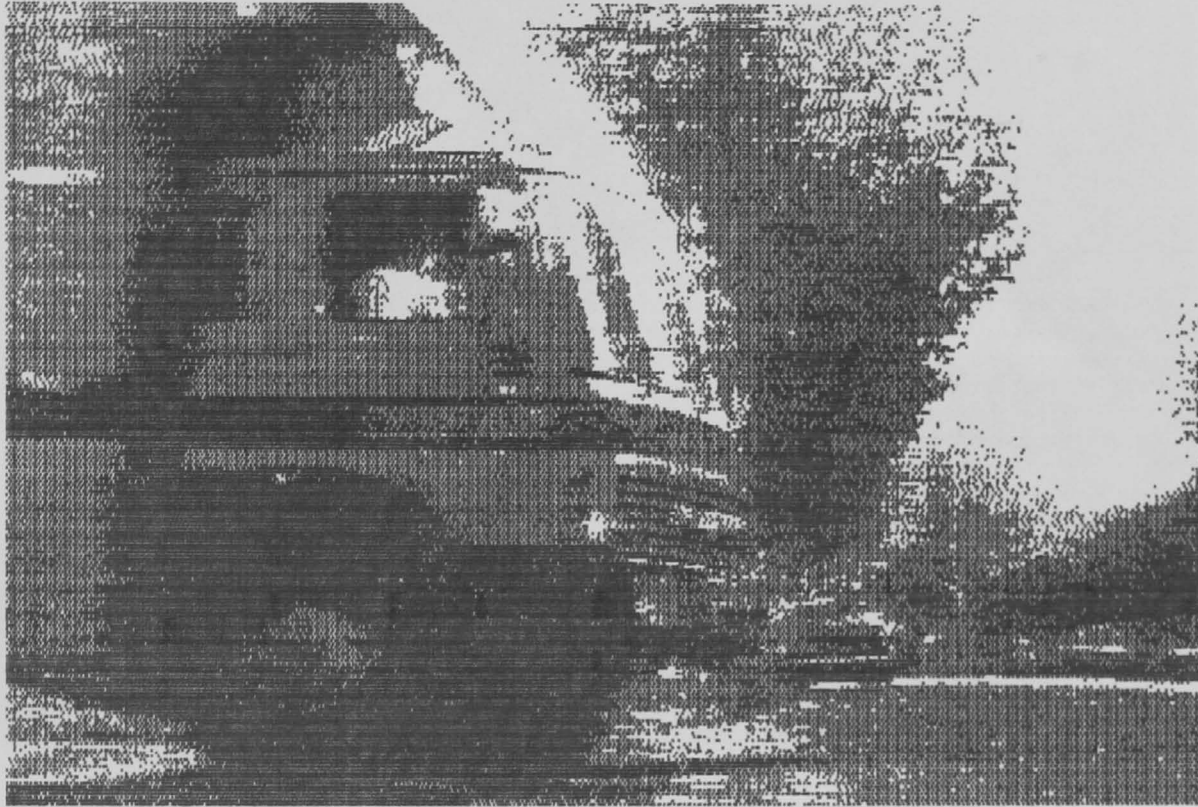
<sup>1</sup>For full transcript, see Appendix VI



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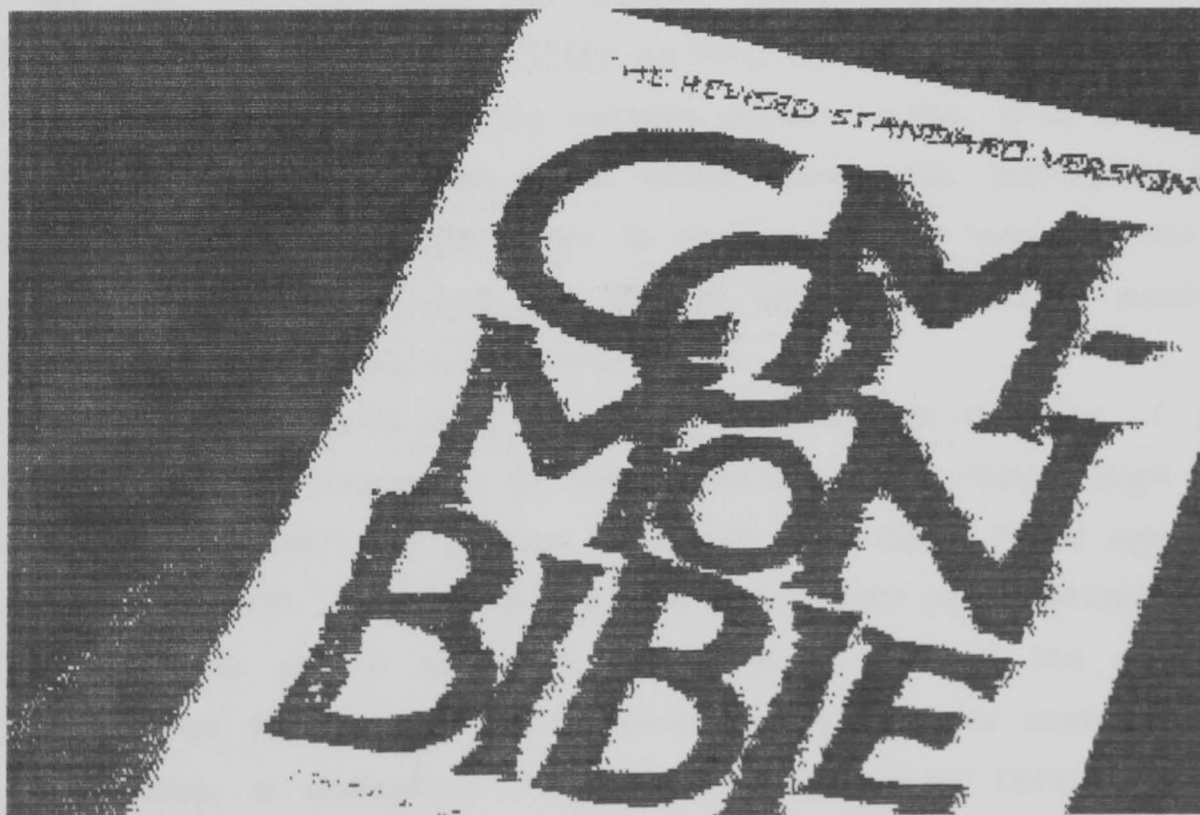
through a series of icons depicting such varied elements as a shipyard, blocks of flats, a BBC lorry...

Fig. 12  
Opening Credits (2)



...basket of bread rolls, cameraman entering someone's house, scattered newspapers, letters, copy of the Common Bible...

Fig. 13  
Opening Credits (3)



...portable transmitter, street scene and, finally, the interior of a home...

Fig. 14  
Interior Shot



In this sequence, the viewer is presented with a whole series of images which, together, is intended to suggest a composite world-view in which God is the creator (witness the reference in the title to Ps.118<sup>24</sup>, "*This is the day that the Lord has made*"), sustainer (hence the bread), and communicator - through the written as well as the visual word. Included in this all-embracing panoply, are various secular icons, such as the shot of the shipyards and high-rise flats, which convey the impression that even here, we are in God's world. There is no 'sacred' and 'secular': all is under God's providential care, and the way in which this can be manifested is through the unifying medium of television.

Such a divergent world-view is propagated through the use of inclusive, yet particularist language: as the presenter says...*"Well, Hugh and Mary, thank you very much for having us all in your home..."* and again...*"Let us all keep in touch with our prayers, but we'd like your letters as well of course to keep us up to date"*, the repeated use of the second person plural ensures that the viewer is made to feel part of something bigger - in this case, a community of prayerful, concerned Christians, who are

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deeply involved in their world. When he refers to 'us all', he is not just speaking of the cameraman, sound recordist, make-up artists, director, etc. etc., who have invaded normally private territory, he is including categorically all those watching in their own home as if they too were present. Indeed, the interplay and interconnectivity is further strengthened by the presence of a television set in the host's sitting room which links the participants to the outside world - or, at least, selected parts of it. On this screen appear the reader of the first lesson (also situated in a domestic setting - his university room), film clips of the night-sky and storm-damaged trees to illustrate Bible readings, the speaker for the day (at home), newspaper headlines, prayer-letters, and various symbolic images at the appropriate juncture - candle, cross, bread, etc.

This method is doubly reflexive in the sense that the primary 'window on the world' - the programme itself - gives way in turn to another such window - the TV set in the room, which enables the viewer to participate in this larger reality by receiving the images into his/her own world. Underlying this process is an important principle, namely that of self-regulation, according to which the level of response is determined entirely by the respondent, and which is in contrast to a church service (for instance) where the ability of someone to effectively respond may be limited by other's attitudes as well as their own. There is little cost attached to such involvement, save in terms of voluntarily entered-into prayer and correspondence, and potential barriers are reduced to a minimum by adopting ecumenical language - the Common Bible, breaking of bread for Communion, candle, and so on. The dominant paradigm is undoubtedly that of established Christianity, one that is repeated in the last programme to be analysed, albeit with a slightly different slant.

### *7.4.5 'Articles of Faith'*

If 'Songs of Praise' taps a common fund of Christian experience in its attempt fill the 'God-slot', and 'This is the Day' aspires at being a belated 'church of the air', this programme seeks rather to educate - to broaden experience, not canalise it.

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<sup>1</sup>For full transcript, see Appendix VII

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The overtly religious symbolism is there, but this time the context is provided by an ecclesiastical building few are familiar with, the interior of a Russian Orthodox cathedral. Metropolitan Anthony guides the viewer through a discourse on prayer as meditation, using as his only props the icons (literally) at his disposal. The range of camera shots, and hence imagery, is limited indeed: four views make up the entire programme, the most sophisticated movement being a pan down from a general shot of the interior to a head/shoulders of the speaker. Otherwise, the viewer is confronted with a series of fixed images which serve as a backdrop to the spoken commentary, and there can be no question that the uttered word takes precedence over these impoverished displays.

Fig. 15  
Metropolitan Anthony





Fig. 16  
Icon of Jesus



Such paucity of imagery is all the more surprising given that the main purpose of the talk is to introduce the viewer to the concept of using icons as a stimulus to prayer. The speaker invites us to *look into "his [Jesus'] eyes"*, before examining ourselves inwardly, and is at pains to explain that such icons are to be understood metaphorically, not literally. Unlike the portrait painting or photograph, which aims to reproduce the details of the subject as faithfully as possible, the religious icon is an *"expression of an experience"*. Certain features are emphasised out of all proportion by means of underlining, others are 'flattened' visually, and far from transgressing the second commandment, the primary purpose of it is to lead the onlooker into a deeper sense of wonder and awe, culminating in the worship of God himself. Indeed, Metropolitan Anthony himself - a bearded, patriarchal figure - is portrayed iconically insofar as the camera draws the viewer into a close consideration of his face as he speaks. The unfamiliarity of the context is not a problem: the speaker is clothed in religious robes; his subject matter is broad enough not to pose a threat to any particular doctrinal stance; his manner of delivery is in keeping with ecclesiastical tradition; and, in any case, the title has clearly stated



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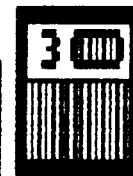
the purpose of the programme - to instruct the believer in his/her faith. In this respect, 'Articles of Faith' is unique in adopting a purely catechetical approach.

#### **7.5 S u m m a r y**

Of the programmes analysed, two utilised imagery and symbolism appropriate only to a 'committed' audience ('This is the Day' and 'Articles of Faith'), one mixed the dominant paradigm with conflicting mythologies ('Songs of Praise'), one adopted the language of its secular context to the virtual exclusion of any religious content ('Highway'), and one attempted to communicate using familiar iconography in a way more usually associated with the preacher ('Late Call'). It is, perhaps, no coincidence that the highest degree of secularisation was found in the offerings of Independent Television with its less restrictive view of public-service broadcasting. Whether such trends are likely to be extended into the future, given the uncertainty presently facing the industry with regard to deregulation, is one of the questions to be considered in the concluding chapter below [see Postscript].

## Chapter Eight

### GODWATCHING IN PERSPECTIVE



## *Chapter Eight: Godwatching in perspective*

### **8.1 C o n t e x t**

In October 1988, as the present document was nearing completion, an important volume was published, the contents of which required more than the passing reference made to them above (p57): the title of this work was *'Godwatching: Viewers, Religion and Television'* (IBA 1988). Intended as a background document to the IBA consultation to be held in Northern Ireland the following month, it draws together the findings of two research exercises carried out in 1968 and 1987, and is described by Eric Shegog in its Foreword as a "*veritable spring*" in the comparative desert of empirically derived data. In this chapter, I shall examine points of similarity between that work and this, in addition to highlighting areas where there appear to be significant divergences of fact or inference.

As the title suggests, the book focuses on three separate, and yet interdependent aspects of the communicative process - the viewers themselves, religion as a social reality, and television or, to be more precise, those programmes deemed to be religious. The audience is dealt with along fairly conventional lines, estimating sizes and levels of appreciation compared to other genres such as Current Affairs, while some attempt is made to analyse the effect of the variables Age, Sex and 'Social Grade'. The section dealing with Religion, (chapter 4), accounts for the bulk of the material and largely consists of a comparative exercise with the findings of the 1968 survey (referred to above, p57), using the same scale of 'religiosity' to ensure compatability. The discussion of religious television centres around the questions Who watches?, Who should watch?, and Why don't people watch?, all within the framework (established above) of a society which seems to be defying the laws of secularisation.

The scene is set when, in the introductory chapter, the authors state that "*Even at this fairly mature stage in the life of television we still know relatively little about who is interested in what*" [ibid., p1]. This rather dismissive claim is further qualified by a rider to the effect that the only areas we can confidently discuss are those relating to demographic aspects, our knowledge of viewer aims, ambitions, worries, fears etc., being sadly lacking. 'Godwatching' certainly attempts to open up this area with respect to the viewers' religious dimension, but it is not clear whether

this has been as satisfactorily integrated into an analysis of their viewing habits as might have been expected. There is a slightly uneasy relationship overall between the empirical data presented here, and the underlying presuppositions which, although never stated explicitly, may be apparent in such statements as - "*In Europe we have so far avoided the American experience of the Electronic Church*", the overall intention being to "*confine ourselves to the facts as found out, and leave the implications to be argued and decided elsewhere*" (ibid., p2). This emphasis on 'objectivity' and the 'social-scientific' process is further bolstered by a reference to Dr Michael Ramsey who, when Archbishop of Canterbury, spoke approvingly of such tools in the search for understanding:

*I am sure it is only through scientific investigations that we really find out what is what and are not just left at the mercy of a lot of blabber*

The following analysis will reveal to what extent such confidence is justified.

## **8.2 A i m s**

Unsurprisingly, the Pilkington and Annan reports are cited as the authoritative documents which give religious broadcasters their three-fold vision (see above, s3.4), although the third of these aims, reaching those beyond the organised life of the Church, is regarded in poor light. Two reports emanating from the William Temple College<sup>1</sup> appear to lend weight to the view that, until very recently at least, programmes marketed with the non-Churchgoer in mind were largely ineffective, restricting themselves in the main to "*conjuring up nostalgic images of childhood and of church worship*" (ibid., p6). Despite the authors' contention that it is "*doubtful whether...quite such rigorous criticism would be justified today*", the evidence presented in the present study suggests that this may be a rather optimistic conclusion.

According to the audience research undertaken by the IBA, the primary aim of religious programmes remains as it was in 1968, namely 'the provision of services for people who cannot get to church'.

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<sup>1</sup> *Mainstream Religion* (1963) and *The Faith and The Fringe* (1966)

### *Chapter Eight: Godwatching in perspective*

In the earlier of the two surveys, 47% of those interviewed thought that this should be 'an important aim'; in 1987, the wording was amended to prompt for the 'main purpose', and 25% agreed that this should be it. This being the case, it might reasonably be expected that in a predominantly Christian sample a significant number should, when asked to name a religious programme, offer 'Service' as an answer. However, in the present study only 0.8% overall did so as a first choice, 2.6% as second, and 10.3% of those managing three names placed it here. Clearly the findings are not directly comparable since in the case of the IBA it is 'perceived purpose' which is being sought, ie. the sort of religious programme other people ought to be watching, whereas in the survey carried out in the context of the present research respondents were asked to name programmes they themselves associated with the label 'religious'. Nevertheless, it may well be that the **context** within which a question is posed exerts more than a little influence over the way in which it is answered: the IBA offered a range of possible purposes but only one clearly identified a particular **type** of programme - the Service; the others tended to be less clearly defined and, therefore, possibly less attractive. Similarly, 'making people happy' ranked last in both IBA surveys and yet 61% of those responding to the question 'Why did you watch them' in the present study agreed (at least) that it was for entertainment. Either we are dealing with a wide difference between those purposes predicated to self and those perceived as applicable to others, or we are faced with an empirical problem to do with the collection of 'objective' data. In either case, there would seem to be a case for exercising caution in interpreting the results rather than, saying as Svennevig *et al* do that:

*What is particularly noticeable here is the close agreement between many of the broadcasters' stated aims for religious broadcasting and the viewers' own perceptions of the rationale for religious television. [ibid., p7]*

This particular claim is based on an asserted affinity between those aims defined in Annan and the results of their own research, but several qualifying remarks need to be made here. The first concerns the way in which these same aims were operationalised in the IBA surveys: it is not immediately clear how accurately the questions asked reflect the intentions embodied in the stated aims, which were as follows -

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- i, to seek to reflect the worship, thought and actions of the principal religious traditions represented in Britain, recognising that these traditions are mainly though not exclusively Christian;
- ii, to seek to present to viewers and listeners those beliefs, ideas, issues and experiences in the contemporary world which are related to a religious interpretation or dimension of life;
- iii, to seek also to meet the religious interests, concerns and needs of those on the fringe of, or outside the organised life of, the Churches,

Table 2.1 (ibid., p7) lists the questions apparently designed to test the adequacy or effectiveness of these aims, and these are listed below:-

- 1, To provide services for people who can't get to church
- 2, To make people stop and think
- 3, To link religion with everyday life
- 4, To make people more understanding
- 5, To teach people more about all religions
- 6, To bring God into the home
- 7, To make people more interested in religion
- 8, To help people with personal problems
- 9, To teach people more about Christianity
- 10, To make people better Christians
- 11, To make people happy

Attempting to link these together, we might deduce that questions 1, 5, 6 are related to the first aim; questions 2, 3, and 7 broadly reflect the second; and questions 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 the third. The problem is, of course, that the equivalence is neither balanced nor obvious, and this may be due to the fact that Annan's aims are essentially 'directional' while the survey questions are 'functional': in other words, Annan envisaged a difference in audience type which would necessitate a difference in programme type, whereas the questions seem designed to shed light on the way in which programmes are structured, irrespective of intended audience. The situation is further (and unnecessarily) complicated by an unfortunate discrepancy between the figures as published in 1968 and their reproduction in Table 2.1. Most of the percentages printed for this year fail to agree with the original data, with the result that the rankings appear to be different whereas, in fact, there has been no change in the

### *Chapter Eight; Godwatching in perspective*

order of popularity between the two surveys. This means that the authors' statement on page 7 relating to a shift in importance of question 4 above is invalid.

What would have been interesting here would be a comparison of the effect of 'religiosity' on the responses, especially since the aims themselves appeared to differentiate between different levels of conviction, but this relationship was only explored in the 1968 survey.

### **8.3 The Audience**

Beginning on a rather cautionary, almost defensive, note on page 9 - "*As is the case with every kind of programme, the number of viewers...can be an unreliable indication of the intrinsic popularity of religious programmes*", and further observing that viewers invariably express a preference for "*relaxation and enjoyment*" over the serious offering [ibid], the authors then proceed to build their case firmly on the combined strength of viewing figures and audience appreciation levels. The typical Sunday pattern of relatively small (1.1 million in February 1988) audiences in the morning and considerably larger (14.7 million) during the early evening, has not changed significantly since the introduction and demise of the 'closed period'. It is somewhat ambiguous, however, to claim as the authors do that "*the great majority of those viewing (about one in three of the UK population) opted for these programmes rather than the alternatives*" [ibid., p11/12]. What this suggests is that 1/3 of the UK population watched a religious programme at the time: in reality, the figure of 14.7 million represents somewhat less than 25% of the nation's viewers although clearly this is still a substantial proportion. Interestingly, analysis of the author's own research revealed that some 36% of those interviewed had watched 'Songs of Praise' within the last week, and 19% had seen 'Highway', giving a combined total of 55%: if this is representative of a church-based sample, then the proportion of non-churchgoers in the audience must be considerably higher in order to account for the overall viewing figures; either that, or the audience estimates themselves are somewhat inflated. On page 12 of 'Godwatching', the point is made that religious television viewing is a rather sporadic affair, with most people not watching any

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such programme "on a given day", despite the fact that this stands in direct contradiction to the claim above that "*the great majority*" did so in preference to the other programmes on offer. Here, it is claimed that 'core' religious output is taken up by a majority **over time**. Table 3.4 [ibid., p13] summarises the findings, showing that in February 1988 62% watched at least three minutes of a religious programme, while the comparable finding from the author's own research was 64.6%. Again, this suggests a surprisingly high viewing rate among non-churchgoers. On one point, however, the different findings are agreed - that "*older viewers are more likely than younger ones to watch these programmes, and women are more likely than men.*" [cf. p190 above]. The IBA conclusion that "*a large number of people dip in on a relatively occasional basis*" tends to obscure the part played by 'commitment' in overall viewing patterns; in the present survey, 63% of those who watched regularly (ie. at least once a month), did so on a weekly basis, while overall 41% saw a religious programme every week, compared to 28% infrequently. This rather suggests that as commitment declines, regularity of viewing also declines, so in order to sustain a level of some 60% *in tota*, virtually the whole viewing public must be dropping in on religious programmes at one time or another. Perhaps a more profitable line of enquiry, though, is one which investigates how closely people watch, and the level of satisfaction they derive from it - questions that are considered now.

The main purpose of this extended analysis of audience figures appears to be apologetic: comparison with viewing levels for current affairs programmes, held to be of similar nature, leads the authors to conclude that "*religious broadcasting is not a 'ghetto' inhabited by a minority of viewers*" - an important point if it is to survive deregulation. What is not mentioned is that 47% out of the 57% of viewers [Table 3.5, p14] watching religious programmes, are accounted for by only two of these - 'Songs of Praise' and 'Highway'; the remaining viewers may well be considered a minority group in televisual terms. As to the statement [ibid] that "*the evidence is that TV church services are not regarded as a substitute for going to church*", research in the US suggests that this is not always necessarily the case, at least in the context of that culture [see p29 above].



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Nevertheless, another point of agreement with the present study is the extent to which viewers of religious programmes participate in the viewing process. While the above-average levels of appreciation might suggest a regular, committed audience (as opposed to the fragmented picture painted above), perhaps more important is the depth of viewer involvement, and here the two sets of findings agree. The IBA found that "*something between a third and a half of the audience for religious programmes is actually 'viewing'*" [ibid., p16], 39% in 1987 according to Table 3.8, and this compares with a figure of 63% who regularly 'watched closely' in the present study. Interestingly, the IBA figure for 1968 was 56%, suggesting either a general decline in interest in religious matters, a change in programme content, or possibly a reflection of greater viewing choice; the proportions seeking an alternative (ie. switching off or changing channels) over the same time increased from 16% to 27% [cf. 21% present study]. Similar consistency across the board was found in respect of those leaving the set on but not really listening. As to the number specifically turning on to watch a religious programme, significantly more did so in the case of the present church-based sample than with the IBA - 53% as opposed to 29% [Table 3.9, p17] - once more underlining the importance of faith-commitment in the viewing process.

Svennevig *et al* conclude their audience findings with the following statement:

*To sum up, the available evidence challenges the notion of religious television broadcasting as a stumbling block for viewers. While some viewers do not view, or choose to view, current religious programming, a large number of viewers do watch at least occasionally. Moreover, on the whole they appreciate what they see in the way of religion on television,*  
*[ibid]*

As has been argued above, this conclusion is not necessarily the best substantiated one given the facts as they are. What the evidence does suggest is that two programmes in particular, and only two, draw a large audience, and these are the ones which have done most to break the mould of traditional religious broadcasting. These attract a significant number of 'uncommitted' viewers for a variety of reasons, but for the most part, the audience for religious programmes consists of older, female, 'committed' people who undoubtedly derive considerable satisfaction from the viewing process for the very good reason that they are already highly

motivated [see also s6.6.3 above].

#### ***8.4 Beliefs, Attitudes and Values***

Chapter Four of 'Godwatching' devotes itself to a wide-ranging assessment of religion as a social phenomenon within the UK, and seeks to set contemporary trends against the background of the 1968 ITA survey which acts as a benchmark. Perhaps the most surprising finding, given the assumptions implicit in the generally accepted notion of secularisation, is that enunciated on page 19 where, it is stated, "*membership of any Christian faith accounted for 79% of people*", and "*even amongst people who are not at all religious, two out of three describe themselves as 'Christians'*". Such a high figure compares with 98.4% in the present church-based survey, and suggests that organised religion is still very much a force to be reckoned with - at least in regard to people's perception if not their behaviour - although, as the authors themselves point out [p20], it is possible that methodological changes have coloured the picture somewhat. Further detail is provided by the observation that within this overall schema, a certain amount of polarisation has taken place at both extremes, so that those classified as 'very religious' have grown from 6% in 1968 to 9% in 1987, while those professing to be 'not at all religious' have doubled in the same time from 9% to 18% [Table 4.2, p21]. The significance of the more religious end of the spectrum is further evidenced in the author's own research, where 42.2% overall were shown to be 'highly committed' - not just in terms of beliefs and values, but behaviourally as well. Whilst it is fully accepted that a person's self-perception of their own religiosity is not the same thing as a rather more objective assessment of their overall 'commitment', and that belief-statements are only part of this more sophisticated concept, the fact that 40% of those interviewed in the IBA survey in 1987 were of the opinion that "*religion was important in their everyday life*" [p21] does suggest more than a vestigial role for religion. (The comparable figure for this study was 82% agreeing at least that 'their faith affects the whole of their life').

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When we consider the concept of 'religiosity' in more detail [see also s6.3.2.1 above], it is important to remember the qualifying statements made by Svennevig *et al*: in the first place, the term is **not** intended to be derogative and, further, it refers to the "*extent to which religion enters into the life of an individual*" [p24]. Such a claim is, however, difficult to justify in the context of the scale [see p126 above] used to define the level of 'religiosity', restricting itself as it does to 'internals' - attitudes and beliefs with no necessary practical dimension. It is possible, for instance, that someone could agree with all of the statements and yet not express them behaviourally; it is also possible that a 'highly committed' person might disagree with some and not therefore be classified as '++'. At best it is a useful indicator of religious conviction, but equally it seems to disregard the dictum that 'faith without works is dead'.

Comparing the demographic findings of the IBA, as itemised on page 25 of 'Godwatching', with those of the present study, the following picture emerges. In the first instance, women were found to be more religious than men - except in Northern Ireland, but this receives only limited support from the empirical data analysed in this study: only in the case of the Mothers' Union survey did 'Sex' as a factor emerge as significantly correlated to 'commitment'; elsewhere, interestingly enough, it did not appear to play a determinative role. The absence of 'Social Class' (or Socio-Economic Group) as a factor did, however, emerge in both and this has important implications for the theoretical treatment of religion as a social phenomenon. Thirdly, the importance of 'Age' does appear to be substantiated, but not completely so since in Haddington there was no observed correlation, despite the fact that church membership and attendance **were** affected. This may be more a reflection of congregational structure than anything else, with the gathered community of faith in Horsham transcending age barriers, but such a hypothesis clearly needs further testing. Finally, as to the significance of children within the family unit, which leads the authors of 'Godwatching' to suppose that their presence is associated with a decline in 'religiosity', there is no parallel data available to either confirm or refute such a claim. The conclusion drawn, on page 26, that there has been a "*general weakening of religion as*

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*the cornerstone of British society [and] a distancing of personal belief from daily life'*, cannot be held to derive directly from the data as presented in 'Godwatching'. Not only does it beg the question 'To what extent has Christianity in particular, and religion in general, ever functioned in such a way?', but it also fails to distinguish between the general demise (if accepted) of organised religion, and the apparent strengthening of committed faith-groups who would most certainly claim a strong connection between belief and practice.

One statement about which there can be little doubt, however, is that made on page 27:

*Both the 1968 and the 1978 research clearly showed that the audiences for the religious output is [sic] composed primarily of the committed. This is still the case in 1987; the greater the degree of commitment the greater the likelihood that attention will be paid, and that purposive viewing of religious programmes will take place,*

The problem comes when one tries to reconcile this with statements made earlier about the general appeal of such programmes [see, for example *ibid.*, p13], especially since only 14% of respondents were classified as '++' and, more particularly, with Table 4.8 [*ibid.*, p27] which shows that 48% of those with 'very low religiosity' actually turn off their sets when a religious programme comes on. It is possible to calculate that, on the basis of these statistics and the BARB figures quoted earlier [*ibid.*, p12/13], on a typical February Sunday evening, 21 million people (not households) watch television; of these, 6.2 million turn off at the start of 'Highway' or 'Songs of Praise', 8.8 million watch closely, and 5.9 million keep the set on but don't really listen. What we do not know is how many highly religious viewers are in the audience although, given a figure of 14% nationally (ie. approximately 8 million), we can assume that a considerable number will be among those paying closest attention.

Moving on to the frequency of prayer, the IBA found that even in 1987 "*about one person in two prays to God, at least on occasion, and this may be a considerable under-estimate*". Such estimates compare favourably with the findings of the Lifestyle Survey [see Table 11 above], and the further observation that "*women and older people are more inclined towards prayer*" [IBA 1988, p31], fit neatly alongside the results of the present study [see above p123 and 173]. Where there is a discrepancy is in the role of 'Social Class': Svennevig *et al* found that this made no difference to the amount

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someone prayed [ibid.], but a (negative) connection was found in the case of Haddington and the Mothers' Union; here, socio-economic stability as manifested among those younger males in full-time employment, seemed to occur alongside a marked lack of personal prayer.

One interesting aspect of media usage to be investigated by the authors on page 43 and following, is the tendency of those who are lonely to look to television for comfort. Drawing on an earlier paper by Haldane (1978), they estimate that "*about four persons in ten find themselves, on noticeable occasions, to feel lonely*" [IBA 1988, p43]. Those most likely to react this way are female, older, and blue-collar - the same, in fact, as those who watch most television generally and religious programmes in particular. This leads the authors to conclude that "*there is a clear relationship between loneliness and religiosity*" [ibid., p44] which, whilst not necessarily causal, is significant. However, the main use of television is recognised to be 'entertainment', and Haldane himself found that 'News at Ten' ranked highest among respondents for company-value (the only religious programme out of the eleven cited being 'Stars on Sunday' in ninth position), so any 'pastoral role' seems to be strictly limited. The nearest that the present study came to examining this role was in respect of those 'fragile' viewers who might be expected to treat television as a source of companionship. When asked whether they watched religious programmes for company, only 15.1% overall agreed that this was so, and 1.2% strongly agreed; similar responses for 'entertainment' were 54.9% and 6.4%. Those most likely to be in this category were the elderly in all three samples, but 'fragility' as such only appeared to be significant in the Mothers' Union study - perhaps due to the preponderance of female respondents. What is reasonably certain is that these viewers have greater viewing opportunities than most, pay greater attention to the programmes they watch than most, and derive more satisfaction than most, the only qualification being that they tend to come away 'cheered up' rather than feeling as if they 'belong' - the predicted response.

A warning shot is fired by the authors of 'Godwatching' on page 49, which illuminates one of the presuppositions underlying their work:

*If anything, what may be happening is the opening of a gulf between established religions and people's needs for spiritual guidance, and into such a gap could well come the 'new' elements of fundamentalism and revivalism, such as seems to be occurring in the United States with the*

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### *'electronic church' and the 'born-again' movement,*

Drawing on the finding in the 1987 survey that one in six respondents claimed to have undergone a 'religious experience' (defined as "a particularly powerful insight or awakening" [ibid.]), they use the American model to suggest that these people represent "*potential converts to the newer, evangelistic forms of Christian activity*" [ibid., p50]. Unfortunately, no evidence is adduced to substantiate the claim that these phenomena are, in any sense of the word, 'new', and neither is reference made to the substantial body of literature surrounding the 'electronic church' which might have given a more balanced picture of its role and purpose. To make matters worse, the authors then proceed to contradict themselves by saying "*However, most of those who have had such experiences are already highly religious by nature; growth of new religious bodies tends to develop along the less religious groups, rather than by preaching to the converted*" [ibid.]. If this is so, there seems little point in describing them as 'potential converts' since they must already be, by definition, religiously committed, and Svennevig *et al* have earlier [ibid., p14] taken pains to point out that television services, at least, are not a substitute for going to church. On this issue there would seem to be a greater need for the objectivity aspired to so readily at the beginning of the volume.

## **8.5 Religious Television**

When asked whether the programme they watched had been 'religious' or not, 95% of 1987 respondents in the IBA survey regarded 'Morning Worship' as at least 'fairly religious', 93% saw 'Songs of Praise' in the same light, and 86% 'Highway'; these were the only ones to be so recognised by more than half those interviewed [ibid., p51]. As the authors noted, viewers seemed able to distinguish the "*service-based offerings*" and "*the more serious, discursive and analytical or documentary approaches*" with little difficulty. When a slightly different question was asked, though, in the course of the present study, with a view to ascertaining what programmes people mentally associated with the label 'religious broadcasting', a markedly different picture emerged [see also s8.2 above]. 'Songs of Praise' emerged as clear favourite with 64.7% of the votes, 'Highway' trailed with 16%, and

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'Everyman' came a poor third with 5.8% - the only other programme to be named by more than 5% of respondents. Why 'daily service', for instance, should only be mentioned by 0.8% by contrast, given its unambiguous religious content, is somewhat unclear. Perhaps a televised service is perceived as a special case; possibly those polled were more likely to be attending church at the time it was normally screened and, therefore, did not normally see it; whatever the cause, it is important to note the difference between the two sets of findings and the way in which the data was collected. In 'Godwatching', the view is put forward that people understand the term 'religious' more in terms of "*concepts of morality and codes of behaviour*" than simply faith or creed, but if that were so, one would have expected a greater mix of programme types in the present study. What seems more likely is that viewers associate **discrete** items with particular names: 'Songs of Praise' is (usually) a mix of well-known hymns and interviews with religiously committed people; 'Highway' is fronted by a high-profile personality who invariably includes some sort of religious song in his repertoire; 'Everyman' tends to deal with secular subjects, but from a rather broad religious standpoint. The exception is, of course, the televised Service which contains the highest proportion of religious items of all, but which may pass through the net because it is perceived as religion pure and simple, rather than a programme dealing with religion.

Moving on to the people who watch such programmes, (ie those perceived to be religious by existing viewers), the IBA found that the largest group was 'those who quite often go to church', with 'those who need comfort' close behind; amongst the 'highly religious' contingent, many felt that non-churchgoers were likely to be in the audience [Table 5.2., p53]. When asked who **ought** to be watching, most people said 'non-churchgoers', there being "*somewhat of a mismatch*" [ibid., p54] between the two sets of findings. In fact, according to the present study, those in the audience are most likely to be female, older rather than young, 'fragile', and 'highly committed' - ie., characterised by frequent churchgoing, regular praying, and a strong conviction about matters of personal faith; in contrast, the young, male, 'high non-faith' person is highly unlikely to watch such programmes at all. Reasons for not watching, according to 'Godwatching', are firstly an

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aversion to having 'religion crammed down my throat', secondly a feeling that they are aimed at religious people, and thirdly that the Church is 'out of touch' [Table 5.8, p58]. In the church-based sample, however, the only reason offered by a majority of respondents was that they were shown at the wrong time - further evidence of a religiously inclined audience; 'negative' responses, such as 'boring', 'irrelevant', 'biased' and so on, were made but only in small numbers. Possibly an open-ended question from the IBA researchers might have produced a very different profile. In any case, their conclusion that "*Viewers nowadays tend to perceive religious programmes as preaching to the converted; not necessarily the spirit in which they are made*", seems to be a fair one: if any attempt has been made to communicate with those outwith the organised life of the Church, the greatest hurdle would appear to be one of viewer perception and expectation about which the programme-maker can do little unless, and until, the mould is broken.

### *8.6 The Future*

Rather than engage in empty speculation, Svennevig *et al* round off their survey of religious television with some perceptive, if unremarkable, comments on the state of play. Beginning with the observation that Annan's aims could be redefined as "*celebration, explanation and exploration*" [ibid., p61], which in itself does little to carry the investigative process forward, they then proceed to declare their conviction that the age of 'mass-audience' studies is dead:

*The outstanding fact which has been demonstrated is that while the most powerful instrument of mass communication today has, by definition, a mass audience it is by no means a monolith, thinking, feeling and acting alike,*  
[ibid,]

The pity is, perhaps, that the authors did not build on this insight more adventurously, instead of clinging, as they do, to the idea that television can be treated as a discrete instrument rather than an element in the process of cultural learning. Considering their preoccupation with the virtues of objectivity, it is also slightly surprising to see that a figure declared earlier to be only a "*guesstimate*" [ibid., p23] has now been



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elevated to the status of asserted fact - "it becomes clear that at least the highest group [ie. high religiosity]...and that corresponds to over six million adults in the United Kingdom - are, by our definition, committed believers". Such estimates vary enormously in accordance with the choice of significant factors and cut-off point, so to treat it as anything other than a 'guesstimate' would seem to be extremely unwise.

Two further statements warrant particular attention. With regard to the audience for religious programmes, the crucial point is made that:

*Those who want it, who enjoy it, who pay attention to it are often those to whom religion as such matters most, To coin the old cliché, we may be preaching to the converted, and viewers recognise this, [ibid., p62]*

Such a statement is entirely in accordance, as far as it goes, with the findings of the present study and raises issues far beyond its limited scope. There would seem to be ample evidence for considering religious television as a minority interest as it stands and, if this is accepted, a case for arguing that it has failed to communicate effectively with a wider audience despite its not insubstantial viewing figures. Not only that, but given the additional 'dilemma' that "television is generally regarded by people as primarily a medium for entertainment...[so]...to present a programme which is intellectually or emotionally demanding...can be to court a 'ratings disaster'" [ibid.], it would appear that some sort of policy shift will be needed if religious broadcasting is going to survive as a part of Public Service Broadcasting into the Twenty-first century. The authors of 'Godwatching' have presented the 'facts' to the best of their ability, but it remains for the policy-makers to act on this empirical data, and some of the options open to them are considered in the concluding chapter below.

Postscript:

**FUTURE  
POSSIBILITIES**



## 9.1 Context

On Monday 7th November 1988, the Government published its White Paper on the future of broadcasting - 'Broadcasting in the 90's: Competition, Choice and Quality'. In so doing, it ended months of speculation, and effectively set the agenda for the next round of discussions, broadly confirming as it does the fears (and hopes) of those in the industry. Its main thesis is that there is a need for greater choice: its greatest weakness, according to its critics, that this will lead inevitably to lower standards. Despite making front-page headlines in a number of newspapers, however, there is little evidence that the 45-page document contains anything unexpected: an editorial in *The Independent* (8th November) suggested that the proposals were "*neither convincing nor coherent*", but was unable to raise the level of debate higher through lack of suitably contentious material.

Amongst the changes suggested are:-

- the replacement of the IBA and Cable Authority by a new Independent Television Commission which will adopt a "*less heavy-handed*" approach than its predecessor;
- a gradual move away from licence-dependancy on the part of the BBC, accompanied by a new emphasis on subscription-viewing after 1991;
- the provision of one (possibly two) new terrestrial channels;
- an expansion in the provision of cable and/or microwave distribution;
- two more channels on the BSB satellite to be made available in 1990,
- the granting of statutory powers to the new Broadcasting Standards Authority.

Such developments are likely to have profound effects on the form of religious broadcasting in the 1990's, (an issue to be tackled at the forthcoming - November 1988 - IBA consultation in Northern Ireland), and it may therefore be useful to outline in this postscript the three most probable ways in which those involved in the field generally will respond to the challenge<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> A similar exercise was carried out by Wallis (1987) in which the author used the sociological terms 'accomodation', 'transformation' and 'separation' to describe the various strategies adopted; for the purposes of this study, however, a more useful distinction was felt to be contained in the paradigmatic critique of Hughes (op cit., p207ff). In analysing selected programmes made by various local interest-groups, he found that content could be allocated to one of three basic paradigms - 'Dominant', 'Alternative', or 'Oppositional'; the first of these he defined as "*remaining in the same territory of argument as the commonly-accepted one*"; the second as "*assuming the validity of the Dominant paradigm(s) but stressing the utility of itself, by arguing within the terrain of the Dominant*"; and the third as "*rejecting the whole terrain offered by the Dominant paradigm, ...arguing instead from its own premises*".

In addition to examining the evidence gathered during the course of this particular research project, findings will also be adduced (from Canada and W. Europe in particular) to illustrate the praxis as it obtains in other countries, where de-regulation is a present reality, before finally suggesting some areas in which further research might prove beneficial.

## **9.2 Three Paradigms**

### **9.2.1 The 'Dominant' approach**

The vast majority of those involved with institutional religious broadcasting in the UK at present could be said to espouse a Dominant mentality, characterised by a predilection for traditional values and suspicion of all things American or Evangelical. Wallis (op cit. p.139/140) cites the Church of England's submission to the Hunt Commission (1982) as saying:

*We are particularly concerned to avoid the excesses of the Electronic Church. The very phrase has become synonymous with a debasement of religious programmes on television,*

Similar fears which are regularly expressed in the Press, lie behind the making of 'The Vision' [see ch.1], and formed the basis of an impassioned contribution by Julia Neu<sup>^</sup>beger at a recent working consultation<sup>1</sup>. The producer of the above-mentioned film, Norman Stone, writing in 21st Century Christian (February 1988), had this to say:

*I think it's wrong for Christians to get involved with satellite television the way they are doing... they end up spending thousands of pounds producing programming that is sub-standard... and the only applause they get is from their own card-carrying supporters. That to me is nonsense economically and scripturally,*  
[Wright 1988]

More theologically, Stone feels that such efforts are based on an erroneous supposition - namely that man's sovereignty, not God's, is all-important: in his view: "If there was a television pumping out John 3'<sup>6</sup> for 24 hours a day, we wouldn't make any more conversions." Implicit in this stance are two basic beliefs:-

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<sup>1</sup>'The Media and Theological Education' held at Pollock Halls, Edinburgh - Sept. 20-22 1988

1. that existing programme-makers, through a combination of experience and wisdom, are doing the job as well (economically and spiritually) as possible;

2. that alternatives, insofar as they depart from the public-service model, do an injustice to both their material and their audience.

Given the fact that some sort of change is inevitable, the challenge seems to be to protect the interests of minority groups, maintain hard-won standards, and preserve the centrality of religion to life as enshrined in the public-service code. As Eric Shegog recently (*Airwaves*, Winter 1988) put it - "*after all, you do not practise new climbing techniques when you may be hanging on by your fingertips in a force eight gale*", especially since the opening up of the airwaves is generally perceived as being potentially harmful to the cause of Christianity. Interestingly enough, the Televangelists - so often the object of criticism in this respect - usually employ a Dominant strategy themselves, albeit unwittingly perhaps, stressing the worth of traditional values and goals.

### ***9.2.2 The 'Alternative' approach***

Somewhat critical of the established pattern, but hopeful that it may be possible to work more positively within it, are a number of groups lying on the periphery of both the broadcasting institutions and the denominations. These groups accept the structural limitations of the medium - indeed, these may be regarded as beneficial - but stress that they have been under-utilised in some way. CTVC, Vision Productions, and Oxford Vision are all examples of production houses anxious to capitalise on the new ruling that 25% of broadcast material should emanate from outside contractors, and all are closely connected with the institutions themselves. The emphasis is on supplying a distinctively Christian approach, without the unwelcome bias inherent in much Evangelical material, both on an overtly religious level and in the treatment of non-religious subjects.

In Europe, such an approach is adopted by the Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy, and TSR in Switzerland. The Italian group works in a context where the Dominant paradigm is that offered by the Catholic

majority, and they perceive their role in terms of informing people that Protestantism has existed in the country for some eight centuries. The way in which this is done, is by demonstrating on screen how such congregations express their faith, conceptualise their beliefs, and act out their social concerns, providing "a window to allow Italian Roman Catholics to see something of a world which is simply not reflected in RAI's own output." (Hudson 1987, p11). At TSR, the issue revolves more around the presentation of a Christian perspective to current affairs: since the Gospel inevitably leads to a facing of the meaning of life, all matters pertaining to that life can be couched in meaningful ways, and non-believers in particular can be 'infected' by posing the right questions. The low level of direct political involvement means that broadcasters on, say, the Saturday night epilogue are free to express whatever opinion they wish - provided they can substantiate it, and to that extent they experience a greater degree of liberty than their UK counterparts, but nevertheless the fact that they work within the Dominant system means that they represent the Alternative paradigm rather than an Oppositional one.

Paul Corley, Director of Programmes at Border TV, reflected on the changing structural scene in the most recent issue of *Airwaves* (Winter 1988): whereas in the past, "television had a beginning, middle and end", the latter generally being represented by the Epilogue, the trend increasingly was towards 'seamless' scheduling; religion has traditionally benefitted from a preserved status - befitting its role as an endangered species - but soon it will have to justify its place on merit alone. The business of 'keeping alive the rumour of God', 'addressing the Inner Space', or 'providing another dimension' is something that religious broadcasters must necessarily be involved with, and in a cost-effective industry the message (and its packaging) must be adapted to meet demands. Corley concludes his brief reflection by pondering on the possibility of a breakfast-time slot: "Wouldn't it be nice to be woken up by religion rather than be sent to sleep by it" (ibid., p7). Thus, Alternative religious broadcasting may break with tradition on certain issues, but it cannot break free from its institutional ties - unlike the third group which categorically rejects them.

### **9.2.3 The 'Oppositional' approach**

The frustrations of those who advocate a policy of opposition or separation, are summed up by John Q. Davies of the Christian Broadcasting Campaign when he claims that religious broadcasting in the UK is "*the most illiberal this side of the Iron Curtain*" (cited by Andrew Lycett in *The Times*, 11/11/1987). It is the apparent bias against Evangelicalism that upsets them most, each side defending their position with a marked intransigence: for the Broadcasters, Eric Shegog (*Sunday Times*, 10/9/1987) declares that "*While we cannot claim to reflect all religious groups all of the time, we do present most of them some of the time*"; unmoved by such rhetoric, Aden Murcutt of CVG believes "*We only exist because broadcast television gives such a poor representation of Christianity*" (Wright 1988). What is apparent here, as far as can be ascertained from such fragmentary discourse is that, underlying these attitudes, there is a fundamental lack of agreement as to the role of the religious broadcaster, and an equivalent lack of tolerance on both sides. Those in opposition tend to 'throw out the baby with the bathwater' insofar as they do not separate the medium from the message with any degree of exactitude, while the Broadcasters for their part show little respect for Evangelical Christianity. The result is that for those who favour the radical approach, nothing short of a distinctive, separate channel will suffice - one that broadcasts Christian material, is produced by Christians, and is free to propagate a particularist faith. In some ways, this approximates to the increased use - on their own terms - of video by trade unions who see the medium primarily as a tool of repression (see, for example, article in *Audio Visual*, March 1986 entitled 'Fighting back with a management weapon'), but it also has parallels in broadcasting structures abroad: two examples may serve to illustrate the point.

In the Netherlands, the problems of media domination were tackled as long ago as 1975 in a government Memorandum designed to generate a coherent media policy (Wieten 1979), and 'pluriformity' became a key word in discussing the dissemination of information. Dutch society was held to consist of a multitude of separate identities - political, social, religious and cultural - all of which deserved access to the media: indeed, one of

the Memo's conclusions specifically stated:

*If an important spiritual current in society has no access to the media, so that there is clearly a lack - viewed against the background of the pluriformity of society - then initiatives to deal with that need deserve to be supported.*  
(*ibid.*, p172)

Since the 1920's, broadcasting unions had been organized on a 'shared-interest' basis: four - AVRO (neutral), VARA (Socialist), KRO (Roman Catholic) and NCRV (orthodox Protestant) - had 20% of broadcasting time each, VPRO (Liberal Protestant) 5%, and the remaining 15% was reserved for common programming. After the Broadcasting Act of 1967, two more groups were granted airtime - TROS and EO (an Evangelical breakaway group from NCRV) - but, despite increasing desire for financial and managerial independence, the situation has changed little subsequently. In theory, the structure appears to be a model of accessibility and liberty; in practice, the primary beneficiaries appear to be the broadcasting organisations themselves and the two main political parties which support them (Third 1985). Even their own members, as evidenced in viewing figures, seem to prefer a non-ideological diet of imported soaps and domestic satires, and there have been moves (so far unsuccessful) towards a separation of commercial and public-service channels.

In this context, the Dominant paradigm is reflected in the philosophy of NCRV and KRO in particular, and it is EO which comes nearest to the concept of an Oppositional approach. Whereas the former speak in terms of "using radio and television to the enhancement of religious life" or "for the cultural development, information and entertainment of listeners and viewers", EO quite blatantly intends to "spread the word about the historical Jesus as widely as possible" (Hudson 1987, p.27), doing so through a mix of Current Affairs, Variety, Music and Youth programmes in addition to straight Evangelism. As Hudson says, "Their programmes are not all about preaching, but the basic ethic of the Bible is always there to a greater or lesser degree." (*ibid.*, p27). In accordance with these principles, only professing Christians are employed by the organisation, and any failure to live up to Biblical teaching results in a termination of contract - an important point since EO "aim to be involved with the personal life of everyone" (*ibid.*, p29) and must show consistency. According



to this paradigm, the Gospel is part of normal life, not something "stuck in a 'religious ghetto'".

In Canada, on the other hand, the Oppositional approach takes a slightly different form. In an effort to counteract the materialistic world-view of commercial broadcasting, faith-groups from every part of the spectrum have combined to form the Canadian Interfaith Network (subsequently renamed Vision Television). Already committed to the project are representatives of the Anglican, B<sup>h</sup>uddist, Christian Reformed, Greek Orthodox, Hindu, Lutheran, Muslim, Salvation Army, Sikh, Unitarian, United and Zoroastrian faiths, according to their own publicity leaflet (undated), and in this respect at least, the project is probably unique to date. The underlying philosophy is that 'Vision' can act as a sort of 'media highway', every group being encouraged to drive along at its own speed, so long as there is no danger to other road users. As with the Netherlands, accessibility is seen to be the key to broadcasting accountability, and here too, access is provided through membership: the combined purchasing power of the consortium is hoped to be sufficient to offer a realistic alternative to existing national networks which prove too expensive for individual faith-groups to gain entry. The target audience comprises anyone who is "growing spiritually, ...struggling to live a life of faith, ...concerned about changing social and family structures, ...[and who is] looking for solid entertainment and public affairs coverage with a purpose" (CIN Manual No.1: Producing Programmes (undated)). At present, Vision is in receipt of a Licence to operate, but has yet to start broadcasting: when it does, it will offer three hours of satellite-to-cable material between 6pm and 9pm, five days a week, under the rubric 'Mosaic'. The substance of these programmes will be 'value-oriented' and broadly evangelistic.

Back in the UK, plans for a European religious channel are well under way: an Association of European Religious Broadcasters has been formed; experiments with satellite broadcasting have been undertaken; a Continuation Committee has been set up (via the Lutheran World Federation) in the wake of the Church's Satellite Broadcasting Conference of March 1987; and an ongoing commitment to the principle of such activity expressed repeatedly by advocates of the oppositional approach. To some, however, such a solution would be less than satisfactory, being described

variously as a "poor substitute" (McDonnell 1988), an agent of "marginalisation" (Reid 1987), "preaching to the converted" (Willcocks 1988), and a "Trojan Horse" (Andrew Lycett in The Times, 11/11/1987).

Whether religious broadcasting ever does become truly 'oppositional' will ultimately depend less on the views of its proponents than on the generosity of its sponsors: with decreased protection, increased competition, and exposure to even more rigorous cost-benefit analyses, the genre is in danger of dying out unless it receives substantial backing. Such encouragement is available from across the Atlantic at minimal cost, but it remains to be seen whether the price is still too high. Whatever the outcome, one particular aspect needs to be tackled with determination (and objectivity), and that is the role of religious broadcasting vis-a-vis reinforcement of values: as the Bishop of London (Dr.Graham Leonard) put it so succinctly recently,

*The Church so often seems to be following the way of the world instead of challenging the world with the truth about God, ourselves and the world in which we live. It seems content with patting it on the head and saying 'Go as you are', instead of challenging it, (quoted in The Universe, 2/10/1987)*

If the Gospel is indeed a message of challenge, and if it is the duty in any way of the religious broadcaster to communicate the Gospel, then it would seem prudent to take the evidence we have at our disposal, and work from it a coherent policy whereby that duty can be carried out to greatest effect. To that end, I wish to conclude with a series of suggestions relating to areas of further research which might profitably be engaged in, which both use this empirical base as a departure point and regard it as a link in a (hopefully) growing chain of inter-disciplinary enquiries.

### **9.3 Suggestions for further research :**

α) Bearing in mind the lack of significant relationships discovered during the course of this study with respect to the way viewers **change** in response to the programmes they have seen, it would seem worthwhile investigating this particular aspect in more detail. Possibilities include -

1. Contacting those (already interviewed) who claimed to have undergone a behavioural transformation in some way and soliciting further

information;

2. Repeating the survey using a different sample, but with additional questions included for the sub-group in question;

3. Soliciting responses - quite separately - from anyone claiming to have changed their life as a result of watching a religious programme.

β) Since the samples used in this research were almost exclusively church-based, it would be interesting to carry out a similar exercise on a predominantly non-church sample - if only to legitimate the assumption that religious programmes challenge the 'committed' viewers most.

γ) It would also be helpful to carry the investigation into 'fragility' further forward; at present, the socio-economic status of a viewer has been shown to significantly affect his/her expectations, viewing behaviour, receptivity, etc., but the concept still requires re-defining and re-testing - particularly with regard to other aspects such as unemployment.

δ) In contrast to the general lack of response (in terms of direct challenge) to religious **television** programmes compared to value-reinforcement, the evidence suggests that video in particular may function differently; some sort of parallel study which would compare the workings of (say) broadcast television, cable/satellite television and video in this area of 'challenge' might prove beneficial.

ε) Finally, there are a whole range of issues which require clarification under the heading of 'theological concerns': these include -

1. The impact of televised religion on the form and function of 'community';
2. The correct response of the Christian communicator to working in a 'Power' medium;
3. The relationship between Word and Image in a televisual environment;

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<sup>1</sup>See also Lodziak (1986), chapter 6 on 'Television and Social Fragmentation'

*Postscript; Future Possibilities*

4. The implications of using an ephemeral, entertaining medium for conveying a durable, challenging message.
5. The place of television in particular, and communications in general, in any contemporary Church strategy.

It is hoped that this project itself has, in some small way, facilitated such an ongoing programme of investigation and debate.

## APPENDICES

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## APPENDIX I

## Appendix I: Programme Schedules

<i>BBC1</i>	<i>ITV</i>
	<i>1965</i>
10.30: Mattins	
18.15: Frontiers	18.15: Ring A Bell
18.45: Harvest Thanksgiving	18.35: Quo Vadis
	19.05: A Date With Music
23.10: Frontiers (rpt)	
*****	
	<i>1966</i>
10.30: Morning Service	
18.15: This House of Prayer	18.15: Tingha & Tucker
18.45: Harvest Thanksgiving	18.35: Hallelujah
	18.55: This is the Day
23.35: Kirk News	
23.40: This House... (rpt)	22.35: This is the Day (rpt)
*****	
	<i>1967</i>
10.30: Morning Service	
	14.55: Come & See
18.15: Faith for Today	18.15: Tree House Family
18.40: Grief & Glory	18.35: Church in Question
18.55: Songs of Praise	
23.12: Kirk News	
23.17: Faith for Today (rpt)	22.40: Come & See (rpt)
*****	
	<i>1968</i>
11.30: Cuimhneachadh	
18.15: The Question Why	18.15: Come & See
18.50: Harvest Thanksgiving	18.40: The Rain on the Leaves
	19.00: Choirs on Sunday
23.22: The Question Why (rpt)	

**BBC1**

10.30: Dubhlan ham Beann

18.15: Sunday Set

18.50: Harvest Thanksgiving

**ITV**

**1969**

18.15: Taleisin Tales

19.00: Stars on Sunday

\*\*\*\*\*

**1970**

10.30: Parish Mass

18.15: The Question Why

18.35: No Easy Answer

18.50: Songs of Praise

19.00: Stars on Sunday

\*\*\*\*\*

**1971**

10.30: Parish Communion

18.15: A Chance to Meet

18.15: Facets

18.55: Harvest Praise

19.25: Stars on Sunday

\*\*\*\*\*

**1972**

11.00: The URC

18.15: The Lamp of Lothian

18.15: Double Talk

18.50: Songs of Praise

18.45: Thy Kingdom Come

**BBC2**

19.00: Captain Noah & his Floating Zoo

19.05: Stars on Sunday

\*\*\*\*\*

**1973**

10.30: Morning Service

18.15: Opinions  
or not

18.15: Believe it

18.50: Songs of Praise

18.35: Through the Chair

18.55: See You Sunday

19.00: Stars on Sunday



## Appendix I: Programme Schedules

<i>BBC1</i>	<i>BBC2</i>	<i>ITV</i> <i>1974</i>
10.30: Judge's Service		
18.15: Anno Domini		18.15: That's the Spirit
18.45: The New Beginning		
18.55: Songs of Praise		18.55: Songs for Sunday
18.55: Religious America		
*****		
		<i>1975</i>
11.00: Eucharist		
		18.15: The Stories of the Saints
		18.30: Chapter & Verse
18.55: Songs of Praise		18.55: Stars on Sunday
*****		
		<i>1976</i>
11.00: Sunday Worship		
18.15: Anno Domini		18.15: That's the Spirit
		18.40: Strike that Rock
18.55: Songs of Praise		19.00: Stars on Sunday
*****		
		<i>1977</i>
09.15: The Sunday Gang		
12.15: Sunday Worship		
17.50: The Long Search		
18.40: Songs of Praise		18.25: The Whyte Papers
		18.45: Stars on Sunday
*****		
		<i>1978</i>
10.30: Junior Sunday School		
12.25: Family Mass		
18.40: Songs of Praise		18.25: Sermon on the Mount
		18.50: Stars on Sunday

## Appendix I: Programme Schedules

<i>BBC1</i>	<i>BBC2</i>	<i>ITV</i>
		<b>1979</b>
09.10: Wake Up Sunday		10.00 Church Service
12.20: Sunday Worship		
18.40: Songs of Praise		18.00: Sally Ann
22.20: Spirit of Scotland		
*****		
		<b>1980</b>
09.15: Wake Up Sunday		09.05: Jaywalking
12.10: Sunday Worship		
		18.10: House Groups
18.40: Songs of Praise		18.40: Sing to the Lord
*****		
		<b>1981</b>
09.15: Wake Up Sunday		
12.15: Day One		
		18.00: Your 100 Best Hymns
18.40: Songs of Praise		18.40: That's the Spirit
22.30: The Preachers		
*****		
		<b>1982</b>
09.10: Knock Knock		
09.25: This is the Day		09.30: The Big Question
		18.00: That's the Spirit
18.40: Songs of Praise		18.40: Topping on Sunday
*****		
		<b>1983</b>
09.15: Knock Knock		07.25: Thought for a Sunday
09.30: This is the Day		
		14.00: House Groups
18.40: Evening Praise		18.40: Topping on Sunday

*Appendix I: Programme Schedules*

**BBC1**

**ITV**

**1984**

07.25: Thought for a Sunday

11.35: This is the Day

10.30: Sunday Service

18.40: Songs of Praise

18.40: Highway

\*\*\*\*\*

**1985**

06.55: Thought for a Sunday

09.15: Articles of Faith

14.00: No Easy Answer

18.40: Songs of Praise

18.40: Highway

\*\*\*\*\*

**1986**

06.55: Sunday Comment

09.15: Articles of Faith

09.30: This is the Day

10.30: The Human Factor

14.00: Come Wind Come Weather

18.35: Songs of Praise

18.40: Highway

22.40: Voyager

\*\*\*\*\*

**1987**

07.35: Fables, Parables & Miracles

09.15: Articles of Faith

08.27: Sunday View

09.30: This is the Day

14.00: The Gods of War

18.40: Songs of Praise

18.40: Highway

\*\*\*\*\*

*Schedule of 'Programmes Last Watched'*

Songs of Praise	BBC1, Sun.	18.40
Highway	ITV, Sun.	18.40
Everyman/Heart of the Matter	BBC	
Late Call (Scotland only)	ITV, Daily	c23.30*
Rock Gospel Show	BBC1, Thu.	23.20**
Articles of Faith	BBC1, Sun.	09.15
Fables, Parables & Miracles	ITV, Sun.	07.35
This is the Day	BBC1, Sun.	09.30
Sunday View	ITV, Sun.	08.27
High Spirits (Scotland only)	ITV, Sun.	22.00

\* Subsequently renamed 'Evening Call'

\*\* Last shown in 1985

## APPENDIX II

TYPE	AUDIENCE	AIM	PROGRAMME TYPE
A1	General	To bring men & women to (deeper) commitment to Christ in the fellowship of His Church,	More direct evangelistic though recognising that many conversions do not result from deliberately planned material,
A2	People who listen by accident or who like the programme for its own sake	To awaken (or keep alive) the capacity for response to realities beyond the material or sensuous,	Frequently musical, often sentimental, At different levels, Stars on Sunday, Songs that Matter, Perhaps Adam Smith,
A3	People who enjoy the 'sacred concert' - with possible childhood associations,	To remind & reinforce earlier experiences of Christian worship and belief,	Songs of Praise; Nine Lessons & Carols; some church services
A4	People who question the truth or relevance of the Christian faith,	To clarify misunderstanding, to make theology intelligible, to relate the Faith to daily realities of life, to provide a Christian philosophy,	Panel discussions, interviews & at a different level, the People's Service, Thought for the Day, etc,
B	Churchgoing Christians	To supplement the life of the local church, to provide Christian 'further education',	Experimental worship, great Christian occasions, documentaries, some interviews, Sunday, etc,
C	Elderly housebound Christians, the sick and the disabled	To provide 'substantial worship', usually of a traditional kind, for those who can't get to church,	The Daily Service, late night prayers, most Sunday services & many other religious programmes

[Source; *Broadcasting, Society and the Church* (General Synod 1973)]

## **Appendix III**

[Sources; Christian Directory of Communication 1987, AFCC;  
Who's Who in Cable & Satellite 1987, SelecTV]

New College,  
The Mound,  
EDINBURGH,  
Scotland.  
2nd December 1987

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am a Post-graduate student at Edinburgh University, currently engaged in research into religious TV and video programmes in the U.K.

As part of my investigation, I would be very interested to know more of your particular involvement in this area, especially the following aspects where relevant:-

firstly, what do you regard as your main goals and aims? (if these are summarised in an existing policy document, please enclose a copy if possible - otherwise, ad hoc comments would be appreciated);

secondly, do you attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of your material, and if so, how?

finally, do you possess any supplementary information which you feel might be of help/interest? eg. current catalogue, discussion documents, research papers, etc.

If you are able to help on some or all these points, I am sure your cooperation would be greatly valued not only by myself, but the wider Christian community as well. Naturally, any information of a confidential nature would be treated as such and not used in any published results except with your prior permission.

I am, Yours Faithfully,

N. A. Simpson, BA(Hons), BD(Hons)

If you would like to know more about the research project itself, I should be pleased to supply details on request.



Althea Productions Ltd.,  
45, Park Street,  
HATFIELD,  
Herts.  
AL9 5BA

Anglo-Nordic Productions Ltd.,  
2, Thornton Close,  
Girton,  
CAMBRIDGE  
CB3 0NQ

A. O. G. Broadcasting Council,  
106-114 Talbot Street,  
NOTTINGHAM,  
NG1 5GH

Audio Visual Ministries,  
152 High Street,  
HOLYWOOD,  
CO. Down,  
N. Ireland BT18 9HT

Bagster Video,  
Westbrooke House,  
76, High Street,  
ALTON,  
Hampshire GU34 1EN

British Churches Committee for C4,  
2, Eaton Gate,  
LONDON  
SW1W 9BL

B U Conference of 7th Day Advent.,  
Stanborough Park,  
WATFORD,  
Herts,  
WD2 6JP

CTR Productions,  
31 Lismore Crescent,  
Broadfield,  
CRAWLEY  
West Sussex RH11 9DA

CTVC,  
Hillside Studios,  
Merry Hill Road,  
Bushey,  
WATFORD, Herts. WD2 1DH

Presbyterian Ch of Wales,  
53, Richmond Road,  
CARDIFF  
CF2 3UP

Catholic Media Trust,  
Archbishops House,  
Ambrosden Avenue,  
LONDON  
SW1P 1QJ

Central Religious Advisory Cttee,  
c/o London House,  
8, Barton Street,  
LONDON  
SW1P 3RX

C S C C,  
221, Goldhurst Terrace,  
LONDON  
NW6 3EP

Christian Broadcasting Co. of GB.,  
91, Hallam Way,  
West Hallam,  
DERBY  
DE7 6LD

Christian Communication,  
36, Bevisland,  
Eldene,  
SWINDON,  
Wiltshire SN3 6AL

Christian Education Movement,  
Lancaster House,  
Borough Road,  
ISLEWORTH,  
Middx. TW7 5DU

Christian Recording Bureau,  
18, Blenheim Road,  
LONDON  
W4 1ES

Christian Tech. Resources Centre,  
1, Oldershaw Mews,  
MAIDENHEAD,  
Berks.  
SL6 5HB

Christian TV Association,  
11, Porlock Gardens,  
Nailsea,  
BRISTOL  
BS19 2QX

Christian TV News,  
2, Great Quarry,  
GUILDFORD,  
Surrey GU1 3XN

Christian Video Experience Ltd.,  
6, Cecil Way,  
Hayes,  
BROMLEY,  
Kent BR2 7JU

Christian Video Ventures,  
10, Weymoor Road,  
Harbourne,  
BIRMINGHAM  
B17 ORR

Christian Vision Croydon,  
10, Manor Way,  
SOUTH CROYDON,  
CR2 7BQ

C of E (Broadcasting Dept.),  
Church House,  
Dean's Yard,  
LONDON,  
SW1P 3NZ

Church of Ireland,  
Church of Ireland House,  
Church Avenue,  
Rathmines,  
DUBLIN 6, Eire

Church of Scotland AV Production,  
22, Colinton Road,  
EDINBURGH  
ER10 5EQ

Church Pastoral Aid Society,  
32, Fleet Street,  
LONDON  
EC4Y 1DB

Congregational Federation,  
Congregational Centre,  
4 Castle Gate,  
NOTTINGHAM,  
NG1 7AS

'NAVIGO',  
2, Wyld Court,  
COVENTRY,  
CV5 9LQ

Creative Vision,  
131, Grattan Road,  
BRADFORD,  
BD1 2HS

Crusade for World Revival,  
10, Brooklands Close,  
Windmill Road,  
SUNBURY-ON-THAMES,  
Middx. TW16 7DX

Dales TV Ltd.,  
Church House,  
12a, North Parade,  
BRADFORD  
BD1 3HT

Ears & Eyes Production Co Ltd.,  
Kerygma House,  
Canal Road,  
LEEDS LS12 2PL

Elim Church Communications Board,  
PO Box 38,  
CHELTENHAM,  
Gloucester  
GL50 3HN

Evangelical Alliance (Media Dept),  
Whitefield House,  
186, Kennington Park Road,  
LONDON  
SE11 4BT

Family Video,  
21, Hickleton Village Centre,  
WASHINGTON,  
Tyne and Wear  
NE38 9ET

Gospel Sound and Vision,  
33, Modena Road,  
HOVE,  
East Sussex  
BN3 5QF

Grayswood Studio,  
The Vicarage,  
Clammer Hill Road,  
Grayswood, HASLEMERE,  
Surrey GU27 2DZ

Grenville Film Prodns. Ltd.,  
Kedgeworth House,  
Blandford Heights,  
BLANDFORD FORUM,  
Dorset DT11 7TE

Highland Christian Video,  
47, Telford Road,  
INVERNESS  
IV3 6JA

Holiday Brothers Audio and Video,  
172, Finney Lane,  
Herald Green,  
CHEADLE,  
Cheshire SK8 3PU

International Broadcasting Trust,  
2, Ferdinand Place,  
LONDON  
NW1 8EE

International Films,  
235, Shaftesbury Avenue,  
LONDON  
WC2 8EL

Joy Today Christian Communics.,  
48, Greenlands Road,  
Peasedown St. John,  
BATH  
Avon BA2 8TX

Jump Cut Productions,  
Mole Cottage,  
64, Old Church Road,  
COVENTRY  
CV6 7BY

Kenneth Copeland Ministries,  
PO Box 15,  
BATH,  
Avon BA1 1GD

L. B. C. Video,  
London Bible College,  
Green Lane,  
NORTHWOOD,  
Middx. HA6 2UW

Longview Training & Video Services,  
72, Marlow Road,  
HIGH WYCOMBE,  
Bucks. HP11 1TH

MRA Productions,  
12, Palace Street,  
LONDON  
SW1E 5JF

Methodist Home Mission (Communics.),  
1, Central Buildings,  
Westminster,  
LONDON  
SW1H 9NU

Mothers' Union Media Dept.,  
Mary Sumner House,  
24, Tufton Street,  
LONDON SW1P 3RB

Nat. Catholic Radio & TV Centre,  
St. Gabriel's,  
Oakleigh Road,  
Hatch End, PINNER,  
Middx. HA5 4HB

Nat. Viewers & Listeners Assocn.,  
Ardleigh,  
COLCHESTER,  
Essex  
CO7 7RH

New Media Partnership,  
Pendleton Vicarage,  
CLITHEROE,  
Lancs.  
BB7 1PT

Pioneer Enterprises,  
PO Box 79C,  
ESHER,  
Surrey KT10 9LP

Presby. Church in Ireland Video,  
3, Edward Drive,  
CARRICKFERGUS,  
N. Ireland  
BT38 7JH

Pro-Vision,  
5, Lindsey Road,  
Uffington,  
nr. STAMFORD,  
Lincs. PE9 4SH

SATV,  
West Garleton,  
HADDINGTON,  
East Lothian  
EH41 3SL

Salvation Army Film & Video Unit,  
101, Queen Victoria Street,  
LONDON  
EC4P 4EP

Scottish Churches Communication Gp,  
41, George IV Bridge,  
EDINBURGH  
EH1 1EL

SU Sound and Vision Unit,  
130, City Road,  
LONDON  
EC1V 2NJ

Spirit Free Communications Ltd,  
Halton Pentecostal Church,  
63/65 Lugdale Road,  
WIDNES,  
Cheshire WA8

Triple Action Video,  
121, Notting Hill Gate,  
LONDON  
W11

The Vine,  
26, Philpot Square,  
Peterborough Road,  
Fulham  
LONDON SW6 3HT

Vision Broadcasting Int. Ltd,  
BM/Box 4801,  
LONDON  
WC1N 3XX

Westminster Prodns. Ltd,  
12, Palace Street,  
LONDON  
SW1E 5JB

Word Films,  
Moulsham Mill Centre,  
Parkway,  
CHELMSFORD,  
Essex CM2 7PX



W. A. C. C. ,  
122, Kings Road,  
LONDON  
SW3 4TR

World Wide Films,  
Shirley House,  
27, Camden Road,  
LONDON  
NW1 9LN

Head of Religious Broadcasting  
BBC,  
Television Centre,  
Wood Lane,  
LONDON W12 7RJ

Head of Religious Broadcasting,  
BBC (Scotland),  
Queen Margaret Drive,  
GLASGOW

Religious Broadcasting Officer,  
IBA,  
70, Brompton Road,  
LONDON  
SW13 1EY

Commissioning Editor Religion,  
Channel 4,  
TV Co. Ltd,  
60, Charlotte Street,  
LONDON  
W1P 2AX

Head of Religion,  
Anglia TV,  
Anglia House,  
NORWICH  
NR1 3JG

Head of Religion,  
Border TV,  
TV Centre,  
CARLISLE  
CA1 3NT

Controller of Religion,  
Central TV,  
Central House,  
Broad Street,  
BIRMINGHAM B1 2JP

Controller of Religion,  
CTV,  
TV Centre,  
St. Helier, Jersey,  
Channel Islands

Head of Religion,  
Grampian TV,  
Queens Cross,  
ABERDEEN  
AB9 2XJ

Head of Religion,  
Granada TV,  
TV Centre,  
MANCHESTER  
M60 9EA

Head of Religion,  
HTV Wales,  
TV Centre,  
Culverhouse Cross,  
CARDIFF CF5 6XJ

Head of Religion,  
LWT,  
South Bank TV Centre,  
Kent House, Upper Ground,  
LONDON SE1 9LT

Controller of Religion,  
Scottish TV,  
Cowcaddens,  
GLASGOW G2 3PR

Controller of Religion,  
Thames TV,  
306-316, Euston Road,  
LONDON NW1 3BB

Head of Religion,  
TSW,  
Derry's Cross,  
PLYMOUTH,  
Devon PL1 2SP

Controller of Religion,  
TV-AM,  
Breakfast TV Centre,  
Hawley Crescent,  
LONDON NW1 8EF

Head of Religion,  
TVS,  
Television Centre,  
SOUTHAMPTON  
SO9 5HZ

Head of Religion,  
Tyne-Tees,  
TV Centre,  
City Road,  
NEWCASTLE NE1 2AL

Head of Religion,  
Ulster TV,  
Havelock House,  
Ormeau Road,  
BELFAST BT7 1EB

Head of Religion,  
Yorkshire TV,  
TV Centre,  
LEEDS LS3 1JS

Baptist Union of G.B. & N. Ireland,  
4 Southampton Row,  
LONDON  
WC1B 4AB

United Reformed Church,  
86 Tavistock Place,  
LONDON  
WC1H 9RT

Forge Wood TV,  
Unit 7,  
Forge Wood Estate,  
CRAWLEY,  
W. Sussex RH10 2PG

Good News TV,  
29 Hartley Road,  
ALTRINCHAM,  
Cheshire WA14 4AY

Christian Broadcasting Corpn. Ltd.,  
24 Cissbury Ring North,  
Woodside Park,  
LONDON N12 7AN

CTV Europe Ltd.,  
P. O. Box 20,  
ASHTED,  
Surrey KT21 2NJ

Lantern Productions Ltd.,  
235 Shaftesbury Avenue,  
LONDON  
WC2H 8EL

Vision Productions  
111 Ecclesall Road South,  
SHEFFIELD  
S. Yorkshire S11 9PH

Rufford Media,  
Mattersey Road,  
Ranskill,  
RETFORD  
Notts. DN22 8NF

New College,  
The Mound,  
EDINBURGH,  
EH1 2LU.  
26th January 1988

Dear ,

I am a post-graduate student at Edinburgh University currently engaged in research into religious TV and video programmes.

As part of my investigation, I would be very interested to know more of your particular involvement in this area, especially the following aspects where relevant:-

firstly, what are your criteria for deciding whether a religious programme is suitable for broadcasting or not?

secondly, do you have any guidelines for the production of such material?

thirdly, is it possible to estimate the level of demand for religious programmes? (eg in terms of audience size)

finally, are you aware of anyone who has been challenged in any way by watching one of your religious programmes?

If you are able to help on some or all of these points, your co-operation would be greatly valued. Naturally, any information of a confidential nature will be treated as such and not used in any published results except with your prior permission.

I am, Yours Faithfully,

N. A. Simpson

If you would like to know more about the research project itself, I should be pleased to supply details on request.

Aberdeen Cable Services Ltd.,  
303 King Street,  
ABERDEEN  
AB2 3AP

BT Vision,  
Room 26/03 Euston Tower,  
286 Euston Road,  
LONDON NW1 3DG

Bolton Telecable,  
c/o National Telecable,  
19 Stratford Place,  
LONDON W1

British Cable Services,  
Southern House,  
1-4 Cambridge Terrace,  
OXFORD OX1 1UD

Cable Camden,  
The Elephant House,  
Hawley Crescent,  
Camden Lock,  
LONDON NW1 8NP

Cable Television Ltd.,  
Forsyth Road,  
Sheerwater,  
WOKING,  
Surrey

Cablecom - Cable Comms. Ltd.,  
Willow House,  
Willesborough Industrial Park,  
Kennington Road,  
ASHFORD,  
Kent TN24 0TD

Cabletel Comms. Ltd.,  
Unit K1 and K2,  
Fieldway,  
Bristol Road, GREENFORD,  
Middx. UB6 8UN

Cable & Satellite TV Holdings Ltd.,  
Newcombe Drive,  
Hawksworth Estate,  
SWINDON,  
Wiltshire SN2 1TU

Cablevision Bedfordshire Ltd.,  
Camp Drive,  
Houghton Regis,  
DUNSTABLE,  
Beds. LU5 5HE

Cablevision (Scotland) plc,  
4 Melville Street,  
EDINBURGH  
EH3 7NZ

Clyde Cablevision Ltd.,  
40 Anderson Way,  
GLASGOW  
G3 8DA

Cotswold Cable Television,  
The Quadrangle,  
Imperial Square,  
CHELTENHAM,  
Glos.

Coventry Cable Ltd.,  
Whitley Village,  
London Road,  
COVENTRY  
W. Midlands CV3 4HL

Croydon Cable TV plc,  
Communications House,  
Blue Riband Estate,  
Roman Way,  
CROYDON CR9 3RA

East London Telecomms. Ltd.,  
ELT House,  
2 Millharbour,  
LONDON  
E14 9TE

Greenwich Cablesene Ltd.,  
62 Beresford Street,  
Woolwich,  
LONDON SE18 6BG

Gwent Cablevision,  
88 Commercial Street,  
Tredegar,  
GWENT  
NP2 3DN

Lancashire Cable TV Ltd.,  
1 Chapel Street,  
PRESTON  
PR1 8BG

Manchester Cablevision Ltd.,  
c/o Halliwell Landau,  
St. James's Court,  
Brown Street,  
MANCHESTER M2 2JF

Merseyside Cablevision,  
1 Chapel Street,  
PRESTON  
PR1 8BG

National Telecable,  
19 Stratford Place,  
LONDON  
W1

Oyston Cable Ltd.,  
1 Chapel Street,  
PRESTON  
PR1 8BG

SelecTV plc,  
Norfolk House,  
417 Silbury Boulevard,  
MILTON KEYNES  
MK9 2AH

Skyline Cable Ltd.,  
38a Oxford Street,  
Mountain Ash,  
MID GLAMORGAN  
CF45 3HB

Southampton Cable Ltd.,  
87 Jermyn Street,  
LONDON  
SW1Y 6JD

Swindon Cable Ltd.,  
Newcombe Drive,  
Hawksworth Estate,  
SWINDON  
Wilts. SN2 1TU

Telefusion Comms. Ltd.,  
Unit 10,  
Barrsfold Close,  
Wingate Industrial Estate,  
West Haughton, Lancs. BL5 3XH

Teleline Ltd.,  
3 & 5 High Street,  
PRINCES RISBOROUGH,  
Bucks. HP17 OAE

A. Thomson (relay) Ltd.,  
27 Audlea Road,  
BEITH,  
Ayrshire  
KA15 2DA



Ulster Cablevision,  
40 Victoria Square,  
BELFAST  
BT1 4QB

Wandsworth Cable,  
c/o The Orpines,  
Wateringbury,  
MAIDSTONE,  
Kent ME18 5BP

West Wales Aerials,  
97 Rhosmaen Street,  
LLANDEILO,  
Dyfed

Westminster Cable Co Ltd.,  
87-89 Baker Street,  
LONDON  
W1M 1AJ

Windsor TV Ltd.,  
21 Victoria Street,  
WINDSOR,  
Berks. SL4 1YE

The Arts Channel  
P.O. Box 7,  
Rassau Industrial Estate,  
Ebbw Vale,  
GWENT NP3 5YP

British Satellite Broadcasting,  
Old Park Lane Suite,  
LONDON W1

CNN International Sales Ltd.,  
25-28 Old Burlington Street,  
LONDON  
W1X 1LB

Capital TV (Europe) Ltd.,  
Brunswick House,  
41 North Street,  
SWINDON SN1 3JY

The Children's Channel,  
44-46 Whitfield Street,  
LONDON  
W1P 5RF

Home Video Channel.  
P.O. Box 2AD,  
6 D'Arblay Street,  
LONDON  
W1V 3FD

Intelfax Ltd.,  
3-5 Alfred Place,  
LONDON  
WC1E 7EB

JLS Infotech Comms. Ltd.,  
7 Wood Street,  
SWINDON  
Wiltshire SN1 4AN

MTV Europe,  
40 Conduit Street,  
LONDON  
W1R 9FB

Optronix Satellite TV,  
2 Great Quarry,  
GUILDFORD,  
Surrey GU1 3XN

Sky Channel,  
31-36 Foley Street,  
LONDON  
W1P 7LB

W. H. Smith & Son Ltd.,  
TV Services Division,  
The Quadrangle,  
180 Wardour Street,  
LONDON W1V 8AA

Space Link Ltd.,  
Unit 1A,  
Wingate Industrial Estate,  
WINGATE,  
Co. Durham TS28 5AH

SuperChannel  
19-22 Rathbone Place,  
LONDON  
W1P 1DF

TV5,  
78 avenue Raymond Poincarre,  
75016 PARIS,  
France

Videovision Enterprises (UK),  
63 Whyteville Road,  
LONDON  
E7

Vision Broadcasting International,  
P. O. Box 137,  
SWINDON,  
Wilts. SN2 3NL

## APPENDIX IV

**Text cut off in original**

- 275-

[illegible]

22. Why did you watch them? Was it for -

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	
Company	1	2	3	4	5	52
Guidance >>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>	1	2	3	4	5	53
Entertainment	1	2	3	4	5	54
Information >>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>	1	2	3	4	5	55
General interest	1	2	3	4	5	56
Challenge >>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>	1	2	3	4	5	57
Any other reason-e.g. Worship (Please specify).....					[ ]	58

23. When you watch them, do you -

	Always	Usually	Some-Times	Never	Don't Know	
Watch closely	1	2	3	4	5	59
Join in (eg. Sing, Agree/Disagree, etc) » »	1	2	3	4	5	60
Watch, but not all the time	1	2	3	4	5	61
Get on with other things » » » » » » » »	1	2	3	4	5	62

24. When religious programmes are on, do you -

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never	Don't Know	
Turn on just to see them	1	2	3	4	5	63
Watch them if they happen to be there » »	1	2	3	4	5	64
Look to see what else is on	1	2	3	4	5	65
Leave the set on but don't watch » » » »	1	2	3	4	5	66

25. Which of the following statements describe the way you feel at the end of the programmes -

[illegible]

26. Has watching a religious programme ever made you -

	Yes	No	Don't Know	
Go to church more often	1	2	3	76
Go to church less often >>>>>>>>>>>>>>>	1	2	3	77
Turn to God	1	2	3	78
Turn away from God >>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>	1	2	3	79
Change the way you live your life	1	2	3	80
Take life more seriously >>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>	1	2	3	81

27. What do you think about the following statements on religious programmes-

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	
There are too many on TV		1	2	3	4	5	82
They should be more controversial	» » » »	1	2	3	4	5	83
They should be more bible-based		1	2	3	4	5	84
" less intellectual	» » » » »	1	2	3	4	5	85
" more entertaining		1	2	3	4	5	86

## NOTES TO ACCOMPANY QUESTIONNAIRE - January 1988

**The Form.**

1. General layout: each form comprises three pages, headed on the first page by the words "REF. .../.../... 3-10". Underneath this, the question number is printed on the left of the page, followed by the question itself, space for an answer or a list of possible answers, a number or set of brackets on the right, and on the extreme right another column of numbers. Each of these will now be described in more detail.

2. Reference: Every form must have a unique reference entered onto it by the interviewer before the start of the interview. It is made up as follows - the first three characters comprise the Area Code : these are

Haddington	-	HAD
Horsham	-	HOR
Farnham	-	FAR.

- the second two characters are the Interviewer's own reference number, assigned to him/her by the area co-ordinator (typically a number in the range 1-99).

- the last three represent the number of interviews conducted by a particular interviewer, beginning at 001 and increasing by 1 each time a successful interview is completed. Thus a typical ref. might be HAD/01/001 where the form in question was the first undertaken by interviewer no.1 in Haddington.

3. Questions: should be asked in the order they appear on the form **unless** instructions to the contrary are encountered. These occur at the end of questions 1, 6, 8, 17, 18 and 20.

Q1. if the person interviewed does not have access to a television, then there is no point in continuing with the questionnaire. Thank them for their trouble and take leave of them. Keep the Ref. No. for the next interview.

Qs 6, 8, 17 & 18. depending on the response the interviewer should move on to the question indicated by the relevant arrow. Thus if 'Working Full-Time' is the response to question 6, the next question asked will be 7; if 'Retired' eg., it will be 8. The same principle applies whenever an arrow is found.

Q20. if the respondent has watched one or more programmes during the last week, ask 21; otherwise go to 22.

Every question (apart from no.1) requires an answer which must be correctly recorded. There are two ways in which this may be done:-

1 - where there is a space provided (ie a series of dots - .....), enter the answer supplied by the respondent either as a number or words. These should be as concise as possible, preserving the meaning of the respondent. Abbreviations should be avoided unless universally recognised.

Do not enter anything into the space between the brackets.

2 - where alternatives are printed in a list, the correct response is indicated by circling the relevant number thus - 1 **2** 3

4 5. (In order to make reading across the page easier, chevrons have been printed on alternate lines ( » » » ); they have no other significance). If the alternatives are listed **vertically**, only one should be circled per question; if there are a series of statements, each with its own list of options listed **horizontally**, each statement should have one number circled.

4. Column numbers: down the extreme right hand side of each page runs a column of numbers, beginning with 3-10 and ending with 86. These are for office use only and should not be marked or altered in any way.



**Conducting an Interview** - some basic advice.

First impressions are very important, and are usually based on appearance and manner.

Always try to put people at ease.

Be confident - if you are hesitant, the potential respondent may well be too.

Dress suitably - if he/she feels conscious of a wide social gulf between you, (eg. due to your wearing a dress suit on a council estate), they may refuse to cooperate or at best give biased answers.

Explain who you are and why you are there. A simple introduction might be - "I am taking part in a survey which is looking into the way people watch TV, and in particular religious programmes. I wonder whether you could help us by sparing 10 minutes or so to answer some questions?". Try to avoid the trap of memorising a set speech, and feel free to add any local details which might be helpful (eg. that you come from a particular church in the area).

If the person you address turns out to be a visitor or child, ask if anyone else is in. If not, either arrange to call back or simply omit from survey.

Stress that there is **no obligation** to cooperate, legal or otherwise.

If the person doubts the worth of what you are doing, offer reassurance on the following points -

1. Answers are totally confidential; no name, address or other identifying information is recorded.

2. They have not been 'especially selected' from the electoral role; some will have been approached because they are church members or something similar, but others will be the result of a random sample.

3. The research is for a University degree, not a commercial enterprise; any published results will preserve anonymity.

If they doubt you, show some form of identification and suggest that they get in touch with either your local coordinator, or myself -

Neil Simpson, c/o New College, The Mound,

Edinburgh.

Similarly, if there are any queries you cannot handle, or in the unlikely event of complaints.

It will be more satisfactory for all concerned if the interview takes place in the home rather than on the doorstep, but if the respondent seems reluctant to invite you in, respect their right to privacy.

If he/she decides part way through that they wish to stop, bring the interview to a close and mark the front of the form clearly to indicate that this has happened.

If other people are present in the room, suggest that another room might be better, or at least a corner away from distraction; their presence might well influence the respondent's willingness to reply honestly, and in any case would jeopardise the accuracy of subsequent interviews with other members of the family etc.

There is no reason why more than one questionnaire cannot be used in a particular situation, provided that the above caution has been adhered to; children are eligible so long as adult consent has been given.

Sit or stand near the respondent, but not so close that they can read the questions.

Make sure that they can hear you and/or see any cards you may hold up. (ie. have they got their hearing aid, glasses etc!).

If English ( or some acceptable variant ) is not their mother tongue, an interpreter is permissible but this should be noted clearly on the front.

Assure the respondent that it is not an exam, so there are no 'wrong' answers, but neither is it an informal chat, so discussion is not allowed during the interview itself, unless essential to making a point clear.

Remain detached but relaxed and friendly.

Look at the respondent after each question to make sure they have understood it.

Pace the interview - some people answer very quickly; others may need some time to think. There is no prize for speed and no penalty for slowness.

**Always** use the printed words when asking the questions - even minor alterations can affect the meaning.

If the respondent doesn't understand a particular question, **repeat slowly** until he/she does.

If they ask you what it means, ask them what they think it means and continue until you are convinced that they understand.

If the response does not fit, prompt for one that does **but** do not fall into the trap of suggesting one to them.

In the event that the respondent wishes to change his/her mind about an answer, mark the relevant column number with an asterisk, and indicate what the correct answer should be.

Do not indicate your own feelings about a particular question - this might well influence the respondent to react atypically.

Flippancy and/or facetiousness is best countered by stopping the interview and stressing the need for seriousness. If this does not work, cut the interview short and indicate the reason on the front page.

Apparent contradictions should be checked in case they are due to misunderstanding, and then rectified if necessary.

If the respondent cannot make up his/her mind about a choice of answers, repeat the selection and ask them to pick the one nearest to their views.

#### **Some Practical Points.**

Use coloured ballpoint/fibretip/or similar but **not** black. Pencil is acceptable, but beware anything that might run when wet.

Wrongly circled answers should be cancelled with a single diagonal line (/) rather than a cross.

Answer every part of every question unless advised otherwise by some printed instruction on the form.

Before leaving the respondent, check to make sure that all questions have been asked and answers correctly recorded.

Don't forget to thank them for their cooperation.

If anyone should express a desire to see the results, suggest that they contact me at the above address.

Try the questionnaire out on someone you know before taking it onto the streets!

If you are unsure of anything, make a note of it and ask your local coordinator. Do not trust it to memory or leave it out.

Read **ALL** the above instructions before commencing.

Thank you for your willingness to take part in this survey; please feel free to contact me if you want to know more about the project itself.

Neil Simpson, 12/01/88

## APPENDIX V

	No. of times cited (if > 1)		
Q18. (Reasons for not viewing)			
I believe in their morality but not their mysticism			
They make you feel guilty			2
They aren't really interesting			2
The method used			
Doctrinal content is poor			2
Biased			
Religion not well presented			
Lack of preaching Christ			
No time			3
Boring			
Rest of family not interested			2
Irrelevant			
Listening to radio			2
Don't like them			
Insufficient variety			2
Superficial			
No need			
Not allowed			
Never there (work)			
Q19. Can you name any?			
	1	2	3
Highway	83	139	44
High Spirits	12	12	16
Songs of Praise	336	96	23
This is the Day	6	7	12
Late Call/Epilogue	14	16	31
Everyman	30	51	21
Heart of the Matter	3	7	10
Voyager			2
Rock Gospel Show	4	11	21
TV-AM			
Service	4	10	24
Housecall			
Hymns of Faith			
Chapter & Verse			2
Praise Be!	12	21	6
Credo	3		4
Articles of Faith			5
Sunday Half-Hour			
Jesus (the film)		4	2
Omnibus			
Christian (Sunday?) Comment			
Festival Specials	2		5
Rainbow			
Daytime			
Encounter			
Stars on Sunday	4		
Passion Play			
Focus			
Contact			
Choices			
Revelations		2	
My God			
Gospel According to Saint (?)			
Bookmark			
Face to Faith			
Every Window Tells a Story			
Company			
Home on Sunday			

## Q22. Reasons for watching (religious programmes)

<i>Singing</i>	5
<i>Participation</i>	9
<i>Happened to be on</i>	5
<i>Ideas for worship</i>	
<i>Love listening to hymns</i>	6
<i>Enjoy (Songs of Praise)</i>	5
<i>Keep abreast of modern hymns</i>	
<i>Worship</i>	43
<i>Spiritual help</i>	
<i>Make up for not going to Church</i>	6
<i>Like seeing the places they go to</i>	2
<i>Lack of choice on other channels</i>	
<i>Music</i>	
<i>Like watching</i>	2
<i>Relaxation</i>	
<i>Keep up-to-date</i>	
<i>Love of people</i>	
<i>Hearing others talking about their faith</i>	
<i>Christian content</i>	4
<i>Curiosity</i>	3
<i>To praise the Lord</i>	2
<i>See if Gospel preached</i>	
<i>Comfort</i>	3
<i>Feeling tired/ Inertia</i>	2
<i>Fellowship</i>	2
<i>Feel part of wider Church</i>	
<i>Nothing else to do</i>	3

## Q25. Feelings at end (of watching religious programmes)

<i>Indecisive</i>	
<i>Interested in things enjoyed</i>	3
<i>Doesn't stimulate too much</i>	2
<i>Stimulated</i>	
<i>Uplifted/Interested</i>	3
<i>Atmosphere</i>	
<i>Disappointed (with Christian content)</i>	8
<i>No impact</i>	7
<i>Annoyed at wishy-washy sermons</i>	
<i>Lack of challenge</i>	
<i>Very angry</i>	
<i>Bored</i>	2
<i>Self-inadequacy</i>	
<i>Annoyed at bad production</i>	
<i>Angry (that Gospel not preached)</i>	
<i>Sense of purpose</i>	
<i>Informed</i>	
<i>Encouraged</i>	3
<i>Exasperated</i>	
<i>Surprised</i>	
<i>Irritated</i>	4
<i>Helped spiritually</i>	
<i>Good feeling</i>	2
<i>Sometimes confused</i>	
<i>Peaceful</i>	
<i>Wish there were more</i>	
<i>Grateful</i>	2
<i>Better instructed</i>	
<i>Joy (at sharing with unknown congregation)</i>	2
<i>Nearer to God</i>	

[NB, Responses are listed in the order in which they were received for coding; the original wording has been retained as far as possible]

## APPENDIX VI

**Mrs M. Bosomworth**  
Yew Tree Farm  
West Marton  
SKIPTON  
N. Yorkshire  
BD23 3UE

**Mrs A. Byram**  
1 Elsinore Avenue  
ELLAND  
West Yorkshire  
HX5 0QB

**Mrs N. Cullup**  
93 Blandford Avenue  
KETTERING  
Northants  
NN16 9AS

**Mrs P. Day**  
356 Northridge Way  
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD  
Herts.  
HP1 2AB

**Mrs S. Duffy**  
75 Buckstone Crescent  
EDINBURGH  
EH10 6TR

**Mrs J. Durham-Matthews**  
Southington  
Overton  
BASINGSTOKE  
Hants

**Mrs A. Forman**  
Walaric House  
ALNMOUTH  
Northumberland  
NE66 2RS

**Mrs J. Gawkrödger**  
17 Kennet Road  
Keynsham  
BRISTOL  
BS18 1NZ

**Mrs P. Briscoe**  
51 Greenfields Crescent  
Ashton-in-Makerfield  
WIGAN  
Lancashire  
WN4 8QY

**Mrs C. Caroline**  
28 Albert Road  
CLEETHORPES  
S. Humberside  
DN35 8LX

**Mrs N. Dade**  
Stonehouse Farm  
Soudley  
CHURCH STRETTON  
SY6 7DF

**Mrs O. Dixon**  
Flat 5  
68 Pilgrim's Lane  
LONDON  
NW3 1SP

**Mrs R. Dunn**  
126 Queen Alexandra Road  
NORTH SHIELDS  
Tyne & Wear  
NE29 9AP

**Mrs J. Earp**  
7 Windsor Avenue  
Melbourne  
DERBY  
DE7 1FN

**Mrs D. Gawan**  
89 Rugby Road  
Cublington  
LEAMINGTON SPA  
Warwicks.  
CV32 7JH

**Mrs J. Gibbs**  
Flintham House  
Oaksey  
MALMESBURY  
Wiltshire  
SN16 9SA

**Mrs H. Harris**  
The Vicarage  
Park Road  
STOKE POGES  
Bucks.  
SL2 4PE

**Mrs P. Hobson**  
20 Charles Berrington Road  
LIVERPOOL  
L15 9HQ

**Mrs C. Laland**  
580 Kenilworth Road  
Balsall Common  
COVENTRY  
CV7 7DQ

**Mrs M. Lawrence**  
Rudge House  
Edge Road  
Painswick  
STROUD  
Glos.

**Mrs A. Meakin**  
20 Dickens Wynd  
Elvet Moor  
DURHAM  
DH1 3QY

**Mrs J. Powell**  
10 Foxhill Drive  
LEEDS  
LS16 5PG

**Mrs H. Ricketts**  
Octon Lodge  
Shoreditch  
TAUNTON  
Somerset  
TA3 7BL

**Mrs J. Harris**  
'Brigsted'  
7 St. Peter's Close  
Lower Heswall  
WIRRAL  
Merseyside L60 0DU

**Mrs E. Hopkinson**  
Russel House  
Stratford-Sub-Castle  
SALISBURY  
Wiltshire  
SP1 3L6

**Mrs J. Laurence**  
1 Hurst Close  
TENTERDEN  
Kent  
TN30 6UG

**Mrs S. Longstaffe**  
7 Cheltenham Street  
BARROW-IN-FURNESS  
Cumbria  
LA14 5HP

**Mrs P. Osborne**  
5 Beacon Close  
LEICESTER  
LE4 1BN

**Mrs S. Revell**  
10 First Avenue  
Denvilles  
HAVANT  
Hants.  
PO9 2QN

**Mrs B. Sillis**  
8 Langdale Road  
Mereside  
BLACKPOOL  
FY4 4RT



**Mrs M. Wellens**  
138 Hollin Lane  
Middleton  
Gtr. Manchester  
M24 3LB

**Mrs S. Witten**  
4 Woodbourne Drive  
Claygate  
ESHER  
Surrey  
KT10 0DR

**Mrs M. Woods**  
Donington Rectory  
Albrighton  
WOLVERHAMPTON  
WV7 3EP

## APPENDIX VII

p289 Transcript of 'This is the Day', transmitted 29/11/1987  
BBC1, 9.30am.

p294 Transcript of 'Articles of Faith', transmitted same day  
BBC1, at 9.15am.

THIS IS THE DAY

- 00 [Opening Credits: Sunrise over lake -> shipyard -> block of flats -> BBC lorry  
-> bread rolls -> cameraman entering house -> newspapers -> Bible -> portable  
transmitter -> street scene -> exterior shot of house -> interior (living  
room)]  
[Camera pans to Presenter who is seated in armchair]
- 01 Presenter: *Well, Hugh and Mary, thank you both very much for having  
us all this morning in your home, as we join together for our  
worship on this the first Sunday in the Advent season. So, as the  
Church begins a new year today, we'll be looking forward in a  
series over the next four weeks to the child in a manger - and  
we'll see quite a lot of babies today, one way and another. But  
that child, Christians believe, is also the one who is going to come  
again one day to be our judge, and our theme today reminds us that  
we mustn't be taken by surprise by that event. Our readings today,  
from 1 Thessalonians Ch.5 and from the Gospel of St. Luke Ch.12,  
make it quite clear that we must **be ready**. And we also hope that  
you'll be ready a bit later on with a candle to light when we  
listen to the Gospel, and that you'll have some bread to share with  
us towards the end of our prayers.*
- 02 [Camera cuts to couple seated on settee.]  
*Well, Hugh and Mary, I know that in different ways you work in jobs  
where you both care for people: Hugh, you're a G.P. in Bristol - how  
does that give you a chance to express your belief in the risen  
Lord Jesus.*  
[Close-up of Hugh.]  
*Hugh: Well, one of the privileges of being a doctor is being able  
to provide compassion and practical help for those people who are  
suffering and in need, and that is obviously very much in harmony  
with being a Christian. Another thing I am very aware of, as a  
Christian doing that job, is so many of the health problems people  
have today are the result of them not knowing about, or rejecting,  
the way that God has revealed for us to live in the Bible, and it's  
good to be able to point people in that direction sometimes. I'm  
also concerned about the number of unborn children that are  
destroyed in our society at present am always anxious to try and  
provide a positive alternative to that having to be done.*

- 03 [Back to Presenter,... Close-up of Mary,]  
Pres: *And Mary, what you do fits in with that in a way as well, doesn't it?*  
Mary: *That's right. several times we've taken in single mums into our home, and I'm involved in CARE - I'm a co-ordinator, and CARE stands for Christian Action Research and Education, and I'm involved in this caring side where we're seeking to place people with needs in Christian homes where they can be looked after. Sometimes the need is an acute need, and sometimes it's a long-term problem.*  
Pres: *Well, in our reading this morning, St. Paul reminds that because we can't know when Jesus is going to come again, we've got to be ready to be challenged by him every day of our lives - perhaps in situations like the ones Hugh and Mary have been talking about. Eric Fok reads for us now from 1 Thessalonians Ch.5.*
- 04 [Camera pans to TV set at end of room,]  
Reading followed by film sequence showing stars and planets in space.
- 06 **Prayer** of Confession followed by music and lighting of candle.  
Pres: *There's an old tradition of putting a light in the window to welcome someone home. We hear about something like it in the Gospel today as the servants keep lamps burning while they wait for their master. So, today, let's make our lighted candles a sign of our readiness to welcome the Word of God. Hugh reads for us now from Luke Ch.12.*
- 08 [Dissolve to Hugh reading Bible,...Dissolve to film sequence,]  
Gospel followed by footage of felled trees being cut up and burnt.
- 10 [Cut to Presenter/Cut to Living Room/Cut to TV set,]  
Pres: *Well, Jesus said we must be ready for his coming, and one thing nobody was ready for just over a month ago was that hurricane. Well, our speaker this morning, Derek Grove, who is Director of CRISIS Ministries in Bristol comes back to our theme again now.*  
Derek Grove: *Sometime ago, we received a telephone call from my wife's parents to say that when they had returned from an extended summer holiday their bungalow had been burgled and all their*

personal and valuable possessions had been thrown all over the place - all the drawers had been pulled out, all the cupboards had been pulled out, and some of their most valuable things had been stolen and, perhaps, never to be replaced. And in all this they were saying 'if only' - 'if only we had come back on time, if only we had told the neighbours we were staying away, if only we had a security system fitted'. Now, a lot of the folk we minister to in our coffee bar in St. Paul's Bristol are in a situation where they are saying 'if only' - in their drug addiction, alcoholism, the crime they are involved in, and prostitution. I help run this coffee shop that helps these people who have the life-controlling problems, and one of these came into our coffee shop the other day, and David staggered in with a split head. And we helped to clear up the blood and put him into a car and take him to the hospital for treatment. And one of our team was talking to him the whole time and began to preach the gospel, beginning to show him the Lord Jesus, and for the first time he understood what it meant to be a Christian, and what Jesus had done for him.

This is the first sunday in Advent. This is a time when we remember the birth of Jesus. We remember those lovely things about Christmas - the humbleness of the whole thing. But we also remember too about the Second Coming. Jesus says that you also must be ready because the Son of Man will be coming at an hour when you do not expect him. That's the 'End Time'. But Davy found the bit in the middle - what the Lord Jesus Christ had done for him, and that was the death and resurrection of Jesus. We are thinking of Christmas; we are thinking of the Second Coming. But if we're to be ready, we must fully understand and receive the Lord Jesus Christ into our lives, for what he's done for us - and that's the middle bit. You know, a soldier to be ready always has his weapon with him at war, and for a Christian to be ready, to know that God is there in all the situations we are in (and he *is* there in truth and reality), then we must have the Word of God in our lives. That's what it means to be ready; that's what it means to know the joys and the trials of life, with a confidence - an absolute confidence - in Christ. There is a beginning, there is a

*middle, there is an end, and Jesus is the complete answer to all these parts of life; the fulfilment is yet to come, and when that time comes, and we face the Second Coming - when we face God - with Christ in our lives we can do it with absolute confidence. So be ready with Christ standing by your side.*

*Pres: Well, we'll turn to prayer now, and as Derek says, we can be quite sure that God does want to meet us in our need, and that he will be with us now as we gather in fellowship together. Your letters are read for us this week by members of Hugh and Mary's church, in Coldicot nearby.*

14 *[Dissolve to static shot of lighted candle,,,Dissolve to static shot of viewer's letter,,,etc,]*

*Prayers:* consisting of extracts from viewers' letters, followed by spoken prayers against a backdrop of a lighted candle.

21 *[Dissolve to stills of people praying in groups and reading Bible,]*

*Pres: We're joined in prayer this week by friends of Hugh and Mary in the Bethany Baptist Fellowship, and they'll be praying this week for everyone who's written and for all the This is the Day fellowship. So let's remember them, and one another, for a moment now...And so we bring all our needs to God.*

*Prayer followed by Reading from Psalm 111 accompanied by film footage of hospital work.*

23 *[Dissolve to show newspapers spread out on table/Zoom in on headlines/Pull out,]*

*Pres: The headlines remind us again how unpredictable life can be, whether it's through accident or because of human violence and hatred. We heard on Friday of the loss of the South African airliner...Prayer...and we were all horrified to hear of the brutal murder of sixteen people on a mission in Zimbabwe...Prayer...and a sign of hope here at home has been the response to the 'Children in Need' appeal...Prayer.*

*In a moment we'll share some bread together, but as we look forward to Christmas and to Christ's return, we'll pray first for the Kingdom to come among us in the words of the Lord's prayer... Now Hugh is going to give thanks for our bread here, so will you say this thanksgiving with him...*

26 *[Cut to static shot of candle, flowers, Bible and bread on table in front of TV set; image is reflected *ad infinitum* in screen. Cut to close-up of bread,*

Pan, showing hand pick it up and break it, pass it to next hand, and back to plate.]

*And so we eat together.*

After the bread is handed round, film of the children (so far unseen) playing in the garden is shown accompanied by music.

29 [Cut to Presenter/Cut to photograph of child's face,]

*Well, Hugh and Mary, thank you very much for having us all this morning. In the meantime, let's all keep in touch with our prayers, but we'd like your letters too of course to keep us up to date.*

**Viewer's letter read out.**

**Closing Prayer by Hugh and Mary.**

[Closing Credits: Breakfast -> ship berthing -> shepherd -> laundrette -> people greeting one another -> children playing -> boat on lake,]

ARTICLES OF FAITH

[Opening Credits: Series Title superimposed on backcloth, Replace with Programme Title - "Prayer as Meditation", Cut to interior shot of building, Camera pans down to figure of Metropolitan Anthony (subtitled) standing beside icon,]

*I'm going to talk to you about prayer and meditation. I should like to contrast the one from the other: prayer is addressed to God - it is a cry or an act of adoration and it is turned God-wards; meditation is a condition of the human soul - a moment when we go inward as deep as we can to reach the part within ourselves which is silence, deep contemplative silence that allows thoughts, images, experience to be still alone [sic] and at the same time to emerge true and fragrant. The two go together in a way because those of us that use what one calls 'ready-made' prayer, that is, prayers which at a certain moment gush out of a human soul as blood running out of a wound - those people must learn to commune with the experience which is included in the words and that requires listening to them, reading them attentively, trying to understand them and then stay with them, not in an intellectual exercise of analysis, but by communing with the thought at that part of silence which I have mentioned before. So that preparation for prayer may include also a deep meditation of the words or the images which they evoke, but prayer itself is turned God-wards. And prayer is not possible, in the truest sense of the word, unless we have a God to whom we can turn - a God who is real in our experience or at least in our faith, in that kind of certainty which the Epistle to the Hebrews defines as faith. [Close-up of Bible page, open at Hebrews Ch, XI, Revert to main shot,] And that means our God must be personal - one cannot pray to an impersonal God. And in that sense again, our dim faith provides us with something which is so wonderful - the Lord Jesus Christ, God himself who has taken flesh, God himself who has become a man, God who has got now a human name and a human face.*

*You can see here an icon of the Lord Jesus Christ. [Close-up of icon,] An icon is an image that reminds us of the fact - the historical fact - that God, transcendental, unknowable, has become intimate, has become one of us, and we can look into his eyes. [Revert to main shot,] At the same time, one must give a warning about icons: icons are not meant to be portraits of God - they are the expression of an experience. It is not an attempt at painting Christ as he was - we do not know his face in the days of his flesh - but we know who he is, the risen Christ, ever alive within the experience of every Christian and of the total*



community. [Close-up of icon, camera closing in to emphasise facial features.] This is why icons at the same time can be objects of meditation and doors for prayer. An object of meditation in the same way as which, when we look at a human face, we ponder and ask ourselves - "What does this face convey to us about the person?". We don't need [to] look at this icon for a long time - we take it in and then we leave with the message we received from the eyes, from the face. [Revert to main shot,]

But then a moment comes when we must close our eyes, close our imagination, and stand before God - invisible, unsearchable, and yet present in our midst so wonderfully close, more close to ourselves than consciousness itself. But how do we pray then? We pray by making ourselves present to a God who is always present to us, a God who is there. We are absent at times: how often do I hear people say - "I don't know where to begin with prayer". Prayer begins at the moment we put ourselves in the invisible presence of God, keep quiet, silent, and say - "Lord, you are here. I am here also. How wonderful it is to be together". And then, how can - what can - we say? At times, our heart is so full: we have so many feelings, so many thoughts. But at times, we are a blank. And, again, so many people say - "How can I pray. Why doesn't God answer?". My answer would be to that, "Because God has spoken first, and your prayer must be your answer". Read the Gospel, read the passage, receive its message, and then turn to God and tell him what you have got to say about what he has said to you. And you will see that there are moments when you can say that with joy, say "Lord we are at one, you and I: we are at one in feeling, in thought, in attitude. Oh, how good - I know you so well now, and I have discovered myself in you". There are moments when we will say in shame, "You speak, and I have nothing to say", or worse, "You speak, and all I have to say is "No Lord, I can accept none of your words"". All that are prayers [sic], and they will be sincere, true, prayers born from the depth of our person. But there will be moments when the presence of God becomes so clear, so overwhelming, so wonderful, and then all we can do is to fall down in spirit and in body before him, and adore him in silence - rejoice that he has come so close that he is with us, and then we can pour out the agonies of our soul - our doubts, our problems, our hopes - or exult in the joy of being his children.

I want now to come back to a point which I left aside, namely meditation,

and I would like you to look at this icon [Close-up of icon showing Mary with infant Jesus], which is an icon of the mother of God, and ask yourselves, or listen to me asking myself, what it conveys to us. First of all, what strikes me in this icon is the serenity and the stillness in it, and this is characteristic of all Russian icons. They are not aggressive. When you look at them, they are there - offering themselves to you unreservedly for you to see, to examine, to perceive: but there is no movement towards you, as though the person, or the person represented in the icon, was trying to take hold of you. The mother of God looks serenely at you and says - "Here am I: I have given birth to the saviour of the world, to Christ, to your own God who has, in and through me, become true, real, man". And this she indicates [Camera pans from Mary's hand to face of Jesus] by putting her hand towards the divine child so that we are aware that the icon is an icon of the incarnation - not a simple glorification of the mother, but at theological statement: God has become man. The fullness of God has abided in a human frame. And then, if you look more attentively to the icon, at the features, you see that an icon is made in a very peculiar way [Cut to head and shoulders (same icon)]. Ordinary features are just indicated, but a few of them are underlined very powerfully. They are underlined so that they become particularly significant - the eyes, the brow. And meditating, whether you look at an icon or whether you reflect in your deepest self thoughtfully on life - on yourself - is in the image of this icon. If you leave aside the icon, and go deep inward, you must be as still as this icon is. You must become immobile as it were [Revert to main shot].

You know, meditation is something like bird-watching: bird-watching consists in going into a field or wood, settling there, and becoming so still - so quiet - that no animal around you can perceive your presence. And at the same time, be intensively alive to every possible movement, intensely alive to anything that may happen. If you are not alive enough, vigilant enough, life will pass you by. The animals will have - the birds will have - flown away before you have noticed their presence. Meditation must be like this - watching, watching attentively, with complete stillness, complete openness. Quiet, serene, and still, listening with one's whole being to what our soul has got to say, one's own experience has got to say, and also to what God may say. A friend of mine said to me once, "the Holy Spirit is like a great, shy bird. He will settle down at a distance.

*Don't frighten him. Be still, be quiet, and he will come close, ever closer to you, and then his presence will reveal to you the depths of things, the meanings of things. Then he will teach you to discover your own self and, at the same time, to discover God". Meditation is an attempt at going inward, but it would be a mistake to imagine that going inward leads us nowhere else but to our own small personal self. At the very depth of our self is a vastness, a rootedness in God. And so, meditation that begins by entering our inner self as it were, and being still, leads us to emerge into all the vastness of God, and it is not in vain that Christ has said [Close-up of face of Jesus from first icon] "I am the door. Whoever will enter through me, will enter God, and come out into eternal pastures" [Closing credits].*

## APPENDIX VIII

Significant Relationships [ie,  $p < 0,05$ ], showing strength of Correlation]

(\* Represents non-significant Relationship; \*\* Indicates insufficient data)

	AGE	SEX	STATUS	EDUCN	EMPL	SEG	RELIGN	MEMBER	COMMIT	FRAGIL
AGE								0,36	*	
SEX	*							*	*	0,24
STATUS	0,47	0,19						*	*	
EDUCN	0,23	*						0,14	*	0,19
EMPL	0,57	0,45						,5	*	
SEG	*	0,32						*	*	
RELIGN	*	*						0,24		*
MEMBER	0,35	*	*	*	*	*				0,19
ATTEND	0,23	0,20	*	*	0,25	*		0,53		0,30
CHILD	0,23	*	0,00	*	0,22	*		*	*	*
XIAN	0,18	0,30	*	*	*	*		0,33	*	*
PRAY	0,19	0,24	0,16	*	0,22	0,21		0,36		0,41
FAITH1	0,19	*	*	*	0,21	*		0,46		0,37
FAITH2	*	*	*	0,27	0,19	*		0,51		*
FAITH3	*	0,29	*	*	*	*		0,44		*
FAITH4	*	*	*	*	0,21	*		*		0,25
HOURS	*	*	*	0,23	0,25	*		0,17	*	*
COMPANY	0,51	0,17	*	*	*	*		0,32	*	0,65
FREQ	0,26	0,19	*	0,16	0,20	*		0,46	0,84	0,37
NON1	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	**
NON2	*	*	0,42	*	*	*		*	*	**
NON3	*	0,28	*	*	*	*		*	*	**
NON4	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	**
NON5	*	*	*	*	*	0,58		0,59	1,00	**
NON6	*	0,48	*	*	*	*		*	0,44	**
NON7	**	**	*	*	*	*		**	*	**
NAME1	*	*	0,25	*	*	*		*	0,24	*
NAME2	*	*	*	*	0,35	*		*	*	*
NAME3	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*
LAST0	0,29	*	*	0,25	*	*		0,34	*	0,34
LAST1	0,25	*	*	0,30	0,22	*		0,24	*	0,35
LAST2	0,20	*	*	*	0,29	*		*	0,45	*
LAST3	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*
LAST4	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*
LAST5	0,23	*	0,26	*	*	*		*	*	0,37
LAST6	**	**	**	**	**	**		*	*	*
LAST7	0,22	*	0,25	*	0,25	*		0,19	*	0,41
LAST8	0,23	*	**	**	**	**		*	*	0,38
LAST9	0,20	*	*	*	0,23	*		0,18	0,40	*
RECALL	0,25	*	*	*	*	*		*	0,67	*

Haddington

	AGE	SEX	STATUS	EDUCN	EMPL	SEG	RELIGN	MEMBER	COMMIT	FRAGIL
REASON1	0,21	*	*	0,28	*	*		*	*	*
REASON2	0,20	0,24	*	0,23	*	*		0,32	0,79	0,28
REASON3	*	*	0,16	*	*	*		0,26	0,58	*
REASON4	*	*	*	*	0,24	0,25		0,24	0,67	0,28
REASON5	0,21	*	*	0,24	0,27	*		0,20	*	*
REASON6	0,16	*	*	*	*	0,27		0,33	1,00	*
REASON7	**	**	**	**	**	**		**	**	**
WATCH1	0,28	*	*	0,23	0,29	0,22		0,48	0,67	0,38
WATCH2	0,27	*	*	0,27	*	*		0,36	0,51	*
WATCH3	*	*	*	*	0,23	*		*	0,46	*
WATCH4	0,23	0,24	*	*	0,26	*		0,38	0,59	0,40
INTENT1	0,39	0,17	0,26	0,22	0,36	*		0,48	*	0,56
INTENT2	0,21	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*
INTENT3	0,24	*	*	*	0,29	*		0,50	0,90	0,32
INTENT4	0,25	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	0,25
FEEL1	0,26	*	*	*	*	*		0,40	0,65	*
FEEL2	*	*	*	*	*	*		0,32	0,58	*
FEEL3	0,20	*	*	0,30	0,27	*		0,57	*	0,38
FEEL4	*	*	*	0,30	0,26	*		0,39	0,50	*
FEEL5	0,21	*	*	*	0,24	*		0,33	0,73	*
FEEL6	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*
FEEL7	*	*	*	*	0,24	*		*	**	*
FEEL8	0,25	*	*	0,25	0,36	*		0,56	0,86	0,32
FEEL9	**	**	**	**	**	**		**	**	**
EFFECT1	*	*	0,10	*	*	*		*	*	*
EFFECT2	*	*	0,19	*	*	*		*	*	*
EFFECT3	*	*	0,11	*	*	*		0,17	*	0,27
EFFECT4	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	**	*
EFFECT5	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*
EFFECT6	*	*	*	0,32	*	*		*	*	*
STMT1	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*
STMT2	*	*	*	*	*	0,27		0,30	*	*
STMT3	*	*	*	*	*	*		0,32	0,87	*
STMT4	*	*	*	0,32	*	*		0,33	0,90	*
STMT5	0,15	0,25	*	*	*	*		0,27	0,90	0,37

Haddington (cont)

	REASON1	REASON2	REASON3	REASON4	REASON5	REASON6	REASON7	WATCH1	WATCH2	WATCH3	WATCH4	INTENT1	INTENT2	INTENT3	INT
LAST0	0,18	0,28	0,16	0,26	0,17	*	**	0,27	0,23	0,24	0,20	0,34	*	0,26	
LAST1	*	0,16	0,25	0,20	0,23	*	**	0,19	0,17	*	*	0,25	*	0,24	
LAST2	*	0,38	*	0,23	*	0,37	**	0,18	0,35	*	*	0,24	0,15	*	
LAST3	*	0,22	*	0,21	*	0,21	**	*	0,19	*	*	*	*	*	
LAST4	*	*	*	*	*	*	**	*	*	*	0,19	*	*	*	
LAST5	*	0,34	*	*	0,13	*	**	0,17	*	*	*	0,19	*	*	
LAST6	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	
LAST7	*	0,20	*	0,18	*	*	**	0,18	0,17	*	0,12	0,21	0,20	*	
LAST8	**	**	**	*	**	0,24	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	
LAST9	*	*	*	0,22	0,14	*	**	0,22	*	0,19	0,17	0,23	*	*	
RECALL															
REASON1															
REASON2															
REASON3															
REASON4															
REASON5															
REASON6															
REASON7															
WATCH1	0,19	0,28	*	0,29	0,25	0,29	**								
WATCH2	*	0,25	*	0,22	0,19	0,23	**								
WATCH3	*	0,26	*	*	*	0,23	**								
WATCH4	*	0,27	*	*	*	*	**								
INTENT1	0,23	0,35	*	0,26	0,29	0,31	**								
INTENT2	*	*	*	*	*	0,32	**								
INTENT3	0,23	0,35	*	0,33	*	0,17	**								
INTENT4	*	0,19	*	*	0,25	*	**								
FEEL1	0,26	0,32	*	0,28	0,24	0,31	**	0,32	0,34	*	0,25	0,37	*	0,34	
FEEL2	0,26	0,37	*	0,25	*	0,28	**	0,30	0,29	*	0,25	0,26	*	0,32	
FEEL3	0,19	0,28	0,43	0,30	0,24	0,31	**	0,37	0,36	*	0,36	0,38	*	0,34	
FEEL4	*	0,28	0,27	0,28	0,22	*	**	0,34	0,23	*	0,25	0,35	*	0,29	
FEEL5	*	0,32	*	0,33	0,18	0,40	**	0,29	0,35	*	0,27	0,31	*	0,27	
FEEL6	*	0,34	*	*	0,43	*	**	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
FEEL7	*	*	*	*	*	*	**	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
FEEL8	*	*	0,26	0,33	0,28	0,31	**	0,35	0,35	*	0,32	0,37	*	0,34	
FEEL9	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	
EFFECT1	*	*	*	*	*	*	**	*	*	0,22	*	*	*	*	
EFFECT2	*	*	*	*	*	*	**	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
EFFECT3	*	*	*	*	*	*	**	0,21	*	*	0,20	0,14	*	*	
EFFECT4	*	*	*	*	*	*	**	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
EFFECT5	0,19	*	*	*	*	*	**	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
EFFECT6	*	*	*	*	*	*	**	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	
STMT1															
STMT2															
STMT3															
STMT4															
STMT5															

Haddington (cont)

	AGE	SEX	STATUS	EDUCN	EMPL	SEG	RELIGN	MEMBER	COMMIT	FRAGIL
AGE		0,31							0,38	*
SEX	*								*	0,43
STATUS	0,51	*							*	*
EDUCN	0,46	*							*	0,37
EMPL	0,48	0,68							*	*
SEG	*	0,39							*	*
RELIGN	*	*							*	*
MEMBER	*	*	*	*	*	*			0,45	*
ATTEND	*	*	*	*	*	0,31			*	*
CHILD	*	*	0,21	*	*	*			*	*
XIAN	0,43	0,21	*	*	*	*			*	*
PRAY	0,24	0,21	*	*	*	*			*	*
FAITH1	0,23	*	*	*	*	*			*	*
FAITH2	0,25	*	*	*	*	*			*	*
FAITH3	0,24	*	*	*	*	*			0,67	*
FAITH4	0,23	0,26	*	*	.2	*			0,58	*
HOURS	*	0,33	*	*	0,34	*			0,39	*
COMPANY	0,28	*	0,46	*	0,31	*			*	0,31
FREQ	0,35	0,24	*	*	0,24	*			*	0,48
NON1	0,54	*	0,54	*	*	*			*	*
NON2	0,44	*	0,60	*	0,43	*			0,65	*
NON3	0,67	*	*	*	0,66	*			0,58	0,47
NON4	*	*	*	*	*	*			*	0,50
NON5	0,60	*	0,74	*	*	*			0,78	*
NON6	*	*	*	*	*	*			0,65	0,65
NON7	*	*	*	*	*	*			*	*
NAME1	*	*	0,47	*	*	*			0,43	*
NAME2	*	*	*	*	*	*			*	*
NAME3	*	*	*	*	*	*			*	*
LAST0	0,34	0,21	*	*	0,27	*			*	0,51
LAST1	0,21	0,28	0,29	0,19	*	*			0,25	*
LAST2	*	*	0,17	*	0,26	*			*	*
LAST3	*	0,32	*	*	0,39	0,42			*	0,33
LAST4	0,27	0,20	*	0,18	*	*			0,31	*
LAST5	*	*	0,25	*	*	*			*	0,43
LAST6	**	**	**	**	**	**			**	**
LAST7	*	*	*	*	*	*			*	*
LAST8	**	**	**	**	**	**			**	**
LAST9	**	**	**	**	**	**			**	**
RECALL	*	*	*	*	*	*			0,47	*

Horsham



	AGE	SEX	STATUS	EDUCN	EMPL	SEG	RELIGN	MEMBER	COMMIT	FRAGIL
REASON1	0,25	0,24	*	*	*	*			*	*
REASON2	*	*	*	*	*	*			*	*
REASON3	*	*	*	0,26	*	*			*	*
REASON4	*	*	0,32	0,30	*	*			*	*
REASON5	*	*	*	*	*	*			*	*
REASON6	0,21	*	*	*	*	*			0,43	*
REASON7	**	**	**	**	**	**			*	*
WATCH1	0,35	*	*	*	*	*			0,41	0,29
WATCH2	0,29	0,30	*	*	0,23	*			*	*
WATCH3	0,30	*	*	*	*	*			*	*
WATCH4	0,26	*	*	*	*	*			*	0,22
INTENT1	0,43	*	*	*	0,28	*			0,35	0,41
INTENT2	*	*	*	0,30	*	*			*	*
INTENT3	0,30	0,22	*	*	*	*			0,34	*
INTENT4	0,36	*	*	*	*	*			*	*
FEEL1	*	0,24	*	*	*	*			*	*
FEEL2	0,32	*	0,43	*	*	*			*	0,41
FEEL3	0,28	0,31	0,36	*	0,22	*			*	*
FEEL4	*	*	*	*	*	*			*	0,27
FEEL5	0,25	*	*	*	*	*			*	*
FEEL6	*	*	0,27	0,22	*	*			0,23	*
FEEL7	0,31	*	*	0,18	*	*			*	*
FEEL8	0,22	0,20	*	0,25	*	*			*	*
FEEL9	**	**	**	**	**	**			*	*
EFFECT1	*	*	*	*	*	*			0,24	*
EFFECT2	*	*	*	*	*	*			*	*
EFFECT3	*	*	*	*	*	*			*	*
EFFECT4	*	*	*	*	*	*			0,24	*
EFFECT5	*	0,21	0,16	*	*	*			0,19	*
EFFECT6	*	*	*	0,27	*	*			*	*
STMT1	0,29	*	*	*	*	*			0,51	*
STMT2	*	*	*	0,21	*	*			0,36	*
STMT3	*	*	*	0,31	*	*			0,43	*
STMT4	*	*	*	*	*	*			*	*
STMT5	0,37	0,35	*	*	0,22	*			0,26	*

Horsham (cont)

	REASON1	REASON2	REASON3	REASON4	REASON5	REASON6	REASON7	WATCH1	WATCH2	WATCH3	WATCH4	INTENT1	INTENT2	INTENT3
LAST0	0,26	*	*	*	0,31	0,24	*	0,36	0,35	*	0,21	0,28	*	0,20
LAST1	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	0,22	0,31	*	*	*	0,34	*
LAST2	*	*	*	0,22	0,18	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
LAST3	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
LAST4	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
LAST5	*	*	*	0,19	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	0,37	*
LAST6	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	*	**	**
LAST7	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
LAST8	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
LAST9	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
RECALL														
REASON1														
REASON2														
REASON3														
REASON4														
REASON5														
REASON6														
REASON7														
WATCH1	*	*	*	0,22	0,26	0,20	**							
WATCH2	0,25	*	*	*	*	0,19	**							
WATCH3	*	*	*	*	*	0,20	**							
WATCH4	*	*	*	*	*	0,21	**							
INTENT1	*	*	*	*	*	0,26	**							
INTENT2	*	*	*	*	*	*	**							
INTENT3	*	*	*	0,29	0,28	0,30	**							
INTENT4	*	*	*	*	*	*	**							
FEEL1	*	*	*	*	*	0,24	**	0,38	0,43	*	*	*	0,29	*
FEEL2	*	*	*	*	0,20	0,30	**	0,35	0,36	*	*	0,21	*	*
FEEL3	0,26	0,22	*	*	0,22	0,27	**	0,48	0,47	*	*	0,29	*	0,19
FEEL4	*	0,22	*	0,25	0,26	0,23	**	0,41	0,41	*	*	*	*	*
FEEL5	0,23	0,19	*	*	*	0,29	**	0,36	0,44	*	*	0,24	*	*
FEEL6	*	*	*	*	*	*	**	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
FEEL7	0,30	*	*	*	*	*	**	*	*	0,30	*	*	*	*
FEEL8	*	0,26	*	0,21	0,25	0,27	**	0,50	0,34	*	*	0,33	*	0,26
FEEL9	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
EFFECT1	*	*	*	0,41	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
EFFECT2	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
EFFECT3	*	*	*	*	0,21	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
EFFECT4	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	0,34
EFFECT5	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	0,41	*	*	0,56	*
EFFECT6	*	*	*	0,30	*	0,30	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
STMT1														
STMT2														
STMT3														
STMT4														
STMT5														

Horsham (cont)

	AGE	SEX	STATUS	EDUCN	EMPL	SEG	RELIGN	MEMBER	COMMIT	FRAGIL
AGE								*	0,26	*
SEX	*							*	0,25	0,19
STATUS	0,47	*						*	*	*
EDUCN	0,24	0,12						*	*	0,23
EMPL	0,52	0,54						*	0,34	*
SEG	*	*						*	*	*
RELIGN	*	0,23						*	*	*
MEMBER	0,17	0,29	*	*	0,20	*			*	*
ATTEND	0,18	0,31	*	*	0,27	*		*	*	0,25
CHILD	0,22	*	0,15	*	0,18	0,32		*	*	0,19
XIAN	0,16	,23	*	0,13	*	*		*	*	*
PRAY	0,23	0,37	*	*	0,23	*		*	*	0,20
FAITH1	0,21	0,32	*	*	0,24	*		*	*	0,19
FAITH2	0,19	0,32	*	*	0,21	*		*	*	*
FAITH3	0,17	0,25	*	*	0,20	*		*	*	*
FAITH4	*	0,28	*	*	*	*		*	*	*
HOURS	0,15	*	0,19	0,20	0,21	*		*	*	0,37
COMPANY	0,37	*	0,56	*	0,37	0,16		*	*	0,77
FREQ	0,25	0,28	*	0,23	0,27	*		*	0,23	0,26
NON1	0,30	0,32	*	*	*	*		*	0,52	0,30
NON2	0,22	*	0*	*	*	*		*	0,38	0,28
NON3	*	*	*	0,25	*	*		*	*	*
NON4	0,23	*	*	*	*	*		*	0,36	*
NON5	0,26	*	*	*	*	*		*	0,41	0,28
NON6	*	0,34	*	*	*	0,34		*	*	*
NON7	**	**	*	*	*	*		*	*	*
NAME1	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*
NAME2	*	0,39	*	*	*	*		*	*	*
NAME3	0,45	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*
LAST0	0,21	0,28	*	0,17	0,18	*		*	*	*
LAST1	0,16	*	*	0,19	0,22	*		*	*	*
LAST2	0,14	0,19	*	*	*	*		*	0,27	*
LAST3	0,16	*	*	0,15	0,21	*		*	*	*
LAST4	0,20	0,12	*	*	*	*		*	*	*
LAST5	,12	0,14	*	0,14	0,19	*		*	*	0,32
LAST6	0,16	*	*	*	0,21	*		*	0,20	*
LAST7	0,18	*	*	*	*	*		*	0,18	0,22
LAST8	0,15	*	*	*	0,16	*		*	*	*
LAST9	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	*
RECALL	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	0,39	*

Mothers' Union

	AGE	SEX	STATUS	EDUCN	EMPL	SEG	COMMIT	FRAGIL
REASON1	*	*	0,24	*	*	*	*	0,38
REASON2	0,16	*	*	*	0,18	*	0,24	*
REASON3	*	*	*	0,23	*	*	*	*
REASON4	0,18	*	*	*	0,19	*	0,26	0,28
REASON5	0,22	*	*	*	0,26	*	0,27	*
REASON6	0,16	*	*	*	*	*	0,21	*
REASON7	**	**	**	**	**	**	*	*
WATCH1	0,32	0,16	*	*	0,27	*	0,32	,38
WATCH2	0,18	0,24	*	0,19	*	*	0,28	*
WATCH3	*	0,21	*	*	0,19	*	*	0,34
WATCH4	0,16	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
INTENT1	0,32	0,20	*	0,24	0,29	*	0,30	0,37
INTENT2	*	*	*	*	*	*	0,20	*
INTENT3	0,18	0,26	*	*	0,23	*	*	*
INTENT4	0,18	0,29	*	*	0,22	0,13	0,24	0,15
FEEL1	0,27	0,17	0,20	0,24	0,23	*	0,28	0,35
FEEL2	0,20	*	*	0,24	0,20	*	0,23	0,28
FEEL3	0,23	0,28	0,23	0,20	0,26	*	0,28	0,36
FEEL4	0,26	*	0,18	*	0,22	0,16	0,27	0,36
FEEL5	0,23	0,16	*	*	0,23	*	0,31	0,42
FEEL6	*	*	*	0,16	*	*	*	*
FEEL7	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
FEEL8	0,25	0,21	*	0,16	0,26	*	0,30	0,45
FEEL9	**	**	**	**	**	**	*	*
EFFECT1	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
EFFECT2	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
EFFECT3	*	*	*	*	*	*	0,20	*
EFFECT4	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
EFFECT5	*	*	*	*	*	*	0,15	*
EFFECT6	*	*	*	*	*	*	0,11	*
STMT1	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
STMT2	*	*	*	*	0,20	*	*	*
STMT3	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
STMT4	0,15	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
STMT5	*	*	*	0,16	*	0,15	*	*

Mothers' Union (cont)

	REASON1	REASON2	REASON3	REASON4	REASON5	REASON6	REASON7	WATCH1	WATCH2	WATCH3	WATCH4	INTENT1	INTENT2
LAST0	0,23	0,25	0,23	0,19	0,15	0,19	**	0,22	0,23	*	*	0,19	0,17
LAST1	0,18	0,18	0,21	*	0,14	*	**	*	0,14	*	*	0,16	,16
LAST2	*	0,14	*	0,37	0,17	0,26	**	0,23	0,14	*	*	0,21	0,21
LAST3	*	0,18	0,23	0,15	*	*	**	0,15	*	*	*	0,12	*
LAST4	0,14	*	*	*	*	*	**	*	0,20	*	*	*	*
LAST5	*	0,25	*	0,16	*	0,18	**	0,15	*	*	0,14	0,13	*
LAST6	**	0,21	*	0,21	*	0,39	**	0,17	0,17	*	0,14	0,14	0,13
LAST7	*	0,18	*	0,13	*	0,23	**	0,21	0,18	0,14	0,12	*	*
LAST8	*	0,16	*	0,22	*	0,43	**	*	0,12	*	*	*	*
LAST9	*	0,25	*	*	*	*	**	*	*	*	*	*	*
RECALL													
REASON1													
REASON2													
REASON3													
REASON4													
REASON5													
REASON6													
REASON7													
WATCH1	0,18	0,29	*	0,31	0,26	0,30	**						
WATCH2	*	0,22	*	0,18	0,17	0,17	**						
WATCH3	*	*	*	*	*	0,16	**						
WATCH4	*	*	*	0,13	0,19	*	**						
INTENT1	*	0,26	*	0,31	0,21	0,22	**						
INTENT2	*	*	0,19	0,25	*	*	**						
INTENT3	*	*	*	*	0,23	*	**						
INTENT4	*	0,21	*	0,30	0,17	0,21	**						
FEEL1	0,17	0,28	*	0,21	0,19	0,22	**	0,32	0,33	0,22	0,19	0,29	*
FEEL2	0,17	0,32	*	0,24	0,19	0,25	**	0,30	0,34	0,20	0,25	,24	*
FEEL3	0,23	0,26	0,16	0,22	*	0,20	**	0,35	0,33	0,20	*	0,24	*
FEEL4	*	0,23	*	0,33	0,26	0,19	**	0,38	0,17	0,18	0,15	0,31	*
FEEL5	*	0,25	*	0,24	0,24	0,19	**	0,30	0,29	0,22	0,19	0,27	0,26
FEEL6	*	0,18	*	0,25	*	0,15	**	*	*	*	*	*	*
FEEL7	*	0,16	*	*	*	0,17	**	*	0,19	*	*	*	*
FEEL8	*	0,26	0,24	0,24	0,30	0,20	**	0,36	0,30	0,18	0,16	0,29	*
FEEL9	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	*	*	*	*	*	*
EFFECT1	*	0,21	*	0,24	*	0,23	**	*	*	*	*	*	*
EFFECT2	*	*	*	*	*	*	**	*	0,16	*	*	*	*
EFFECT3	0,34	0,22	*	0,17	*	0,25	**	0,14	0,30	*	0,15	0,16	*
EFFECT4	*	*	*	*	*	*	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
EFFECT5	0,17	0,15	0,12	*	*	*	**	0,14	*	0,16	*	*	*
EFFECT6	0,23	0,19	0,16	*	*	*	**	0,15	0,18	*	*	0,11	*
STMT1													
STMT2													
STMT3													
STMT4													
STMT5													

Mothers' Union (cont)

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